

Connecticut Guardian

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Connecticut's Well Drillers home after year in Iraq

SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

The 247th Engineer Detachment (Well Drilling) is back home.

After a year serving in Iraq, the 10-person unit arrived at Camp Rowland in Niantic to the waiting arms of their families, friends and fellow Soldiers on April 28.

The New London-based unit left Connecticut on March 10, 2003 for mobilization out of Fort Drum before going overseas after having been put on alert for mobilization on Feb. 10, 2003.

The participated in many humanitarian relief efforts while in Iraq, as well as drilling wells for U.S. military bases there.

Thanks to the men of the 247th Engineer Detachment, the small village of Bezgirtan has a public water supply for the first time in 18 years.

Bezgirtan is a village of 1,500 Shabbaks, a tribe that opposed the regime of Saddam Hussein. According to a local villager, because the village did not support Saddam, the village was neglected.

The unit operated in the 101st Airborne Division's area of operations in Northern Iraq, and their missions included development of local water resources, well



A Soldier of the 247th Engineer Detachment gets a welcome home hug from a loved one after a year in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

drilling and conducting engineer assessments of village water needs in an area bounded by the Syrian, Turkish and Iranian borders.

"It's great to be back home again," said Sgt. 1st Class John Lane, company commander of the 247th.

"Once again it is a happy occasion to greet another one of Connecticut's units home," said Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general, who, along with State Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Zastaury, only a week before had flown out to McGuire Air Force Base, N.J. to welcome the unit back to U.S. soil. After a night at Fort Dix, which is adjacent to McGuire, the Soldiers of the 247th were flown to Fort Drum for their demobilization.

The 247th is the most deployed unit in the Connecticut Army National Guard. members have deployed six times to Central American countries in the past 10 years, all for humanitarian missions.

"The training we received on those missions was the best training you can get," said Lane.

Connecticut Guardsman killed in Iraq

SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

"A Soldier at age 17. A leader at age 22. He was the all-American kid from next door."

Those were just some of the words used by Gov. John G. Rowland to describe and eulogize Sgt. Felix M. Del Greco during the



Sgt. Felix Del Greco

Connecticut National Guard Soldier's funeral.

The 22-year-old Del Greco was killed in Baghdad on April 9 while on mounted patrol. His vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device and gunfire during an ambush. Del Greco, a member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry, had been in Iraq for 36 hours when he died. He was the first Connecticut National Guardsman to die in the Global War on Terrorism.

Del Greco, a Simsbury resident, enlisted in the National Guard in March 1999 as a cook with headquarters/Headquarters Company, 242nd Engineer battalion. In 2001, he voluntarily transferred to Company b, 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry and deployed with that unit on a peacekeeping mission to Bosnia.

In December 2002, he transferred to Company A, 1/102nd Infantry and deployed to West Point in support of Operation Noble Eagle. Upon his return from that duty, he again transferred, this time to Company C, 1/102nd Infantry and deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"When Felix Del Greco enlisted in the Connecticut Army National Guard five years ago, he had an objective," said Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general, during his eulogy. "It was simply to be the best he could be. In five short years his mission was accomplished, continually, every step of the way. Felix was the example of excellence. He was a hero."

Memorial contributions may be made to "The Sgt. Felix Del Greco Scholarship Fund," c/o The National Guard Foundation of Connecticut, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105.



Members of the 247th Engineers Detachment (Well Drilling) rush towards their loved ones at Camp Rowland after arriving by Blackhawk. The Soldiers had just completed their demobilization process at Fort Drum, N.Y. after serving a year in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

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Up Front with the Adjutant General

Welcome Home. Job well done...remain focused

It's been a great honor and sense of relief to welcome back units after their year long "boots on the ground" deployment. A year in a combat zone is no walk in the park.

Members of the 143rd Military Police Company know that, all too well. On April 1 members of the 143rd MP's left the desert behind and stepped onto American soil for the first time in over a year. The unit returned to Fort Drum after a 12 month deployment in Iraq. We are very fortunate to have every single soldier from the 143rd return home safely.

But, their service came at a price, the unit suffered 13 casualties; all were awarded the Purple Heart. It's the highest percentage of war related injuries suffered by a Connecticut Guard unit deployed in Iraq. All the wounded Soldiers have or are recovering from their injuries. The unit was recognized by the 709th Military Police Battalion as the best MP unit in the battalion. The 143rd conducted security operations, to include patrols and training and mentoring the newly formed Iraqi Police Force.

Welcome home 143rd MP Company.

On April 18 and 19 both G Company 104th Aviation and the 247th Engineer Company returned to Fort Dix from their overseas deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism. G Company 104th Aviation, the heavy lift CH-47 Chinook helicopter

unit, had the distinct honor of being named the Outstanding Army Aviation Unit of the Year by the Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA). Their support of the 10th Mountain Division in Afghanistan was nothing short of excellence.

Another Connecticut success story is the performance of the 247th Engineer Detachment. Thanks to the men of the 247th Engineer Detachment, the small village of Bezgirtan has a public water supply for the first time in 18 years. Only some of Connecticut's finest could find water in the desert.

On May 3 members of the 248th Engineer Company returned from their deployment to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terrorism. The 248th Engineer Company specializes in horizontal and vertical construction such as road construction, road repair, construction of buildings and repair. The unit was stationed at Ar Ramadi, Iraq, which is approximately 70 miles west of Baghdad on the Euphrates River for most of their deployment. I salute all of you for your service and dedication to the cause.

Additionally, I would like to honor all the units who deployed for Operation Noble Eagle to provide Force Protection to military installations in the Northeast. TF-192 Chemical, the 103rd Chemical Company, the 134th Military Police Company, and Company C, 242nd Engineers all performed

with honor and exceeded all standards throughout their tours of duty. I salute you and commend each and every one of you for your service.

I would like to honor all the units who deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Noble Eagle the 55th Armed Forces Day Luncheon on May 14 at the Aqua Turf in Southington. The luncheon serves as a great opportunity to recognize the men and women who serve in all the branches of services in the state of Connecticut. This is especially fitting during this time of war.

Our guest speaker will be the Chairman of the Reserves Forces Policy Board, the Honorable Albert Zapanta. Mr. Zapanta is an independent policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense on all matters involving the Reserve components of the United States Armed Forces, including the Army and Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve. Mr. Zapanta has served more than a quarter century in public service.



*Maj. Gen.
William A. Cugno
Adjutant General*

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Perspectives

Considering the current Global War on Terrorism, how will your plans to honor Memorial Day change this year?



**STAFF SGT. SHELIA THOMPSON
JFHQ**

As far as the terrorism that occurred on Sept. 11, for me to have experienced that, it will be very emotional for me especially after seeing everything on CNN and it being such a big issue.



**CHAPLAIN (CAPT.) DAVID LARSEN
103RD FIGHTER WING**

Outwardly things will be the same. The only change for me will be inward. The cost of our overseas commitments is more persona; now. I am proud to be part of this world of uniforms. But it's more clear to me now that each uniform is filled with a specific individual who chooses to be in harms' way if that is what our nation requires. Before I (joined military in 2003) saw as an outside observer.

**SENIOR AIRMAN ROBERT DAVIS
103RD FIGHTER WING**

I joined the guard in September (2003) so I will honor Memorial Day by serving my country, which is different than how I honored it last year, just cooking out.



**SPC. DEAN WILLIAMS
169TH AVIATION**

During past Memorial Days we've honored those Soldiers who risked their lives in past wars such as WWI and WWII. This Memorial Day we're honoring those dying in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

**SPC. NICK O'DELL
JFHQ**

When you think of Memorial Day you think of past wars and past generations, but now there is more of a sense of presence and respect for those who have answered the call of duty.



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Second Company Governors Horse Guard

First Company Governors Foot Guard

Second Company Governors Foot Guard

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Military Police children celebrate Month of the Military Child by welcoming home family from OEF

SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

The children, dressed in red, white and blue, or wearing Military Police Company t-shirts, colored with crayons and markers on poster paper, tossed little rocks around they found on the ground, ran around playing tag, laughing, rough housing and eating pizza.

The scene could have been any American playground or backyard birthday party. But it wasn't.

The children were waiting at the West Hartford armory for the return of family members they hadn't seen in more than a year.

They were waiting for the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and cousins of the 143rd Military Police Company who had completed their tour of duty in Iraq to return home, just in time for Easter.

Picking up pebbles and tossing them around kept three-year-old Ryan Self occupied. Ryan looked like any typical little boy on the playground, until you got a closer look. Peeking out from under his yellow rain slicker was a t-shirt "Connecticut 143rd Military Police Company." On his head was a desert camouflage boonie hat adorned with the rank of a sergeant first class. And he was waving a small American flag.

"Who are you waiting for, Ryan?"

"Daddy."

"Where's Daddy?"

"Daddy work."

"Where's he been working?"

"Daddy Fort Drum."

Then the interview was over because young Ryan, son of Sgt. Todd Self of the 143rd MPs, saw the fire truck pull in to the parking area.

"Fire truck!" he screamed with glee as any three-year-old might.

Ryan's mom, Cheryl, said she really hadn't had to go into detail with Ryan about where his dad had been for the past year.

"He just took it all in stride," she said. "I told him he was at work and would be home as he could be."

John, Laura and Scott McHugh were anxiously awaiting the arrival of their cousin, Sgt. Zach Fretto. They were full of questions and things they wanted to say to him when he returned.

"I want to ask him how's it been to be in a war," said John.

"I want to say welcome home to him first," said Laura.

"Finally, you're back," was the sentiment that Scott wanted to share with his cousin.

All three, whose ages are between 12 and 14, were confident in the training their cousin had received before going to Iraq.

"When the bombs started falling, I was

nervous," said Laura. "But he was trained really well so I knew he'd be ok."

"yeah, he was trained really well," echoed Scott. "He taught me some self-defense moves before he left."

The three siblings said they made posters while Fretto was deployed that said things like "Beep for the Military" and "Beep for the 143rd" and they would sit out on their front lawn holding them up for passing motorists to see. And they received a lot of response in the form of honking horns. All three say they want to join the military as soon as they are old enough.

Young Alexis Moore was all girl as she ran around the grounds of the armory dressed in a red, white and blue cheerleader's outfit with "USA" emblazoned on the front, waving an American flag. She was waiting for her uncle, Spc. Levi Saucier.

"I'm excited that he's coming home," said Alexis. When asked what the best thing about her uncle coming home was, she said "He'll be playing with me. We will play with the beach ball."

Saucier's brother, Zach Simrell, was also on hand for the homecoming.

"I haven't seen him in like, forever," said Zach. "We're going to fix the quads and go riding together. It'll be great!"

Sgt. Matt Major also had his own fan club eagerly awaiting his return. Seven-year-old Jakarie Jackson said she was looking forward to her Uncle Matt coming home.

She said she was looking forward to him "sleeping over the house and playing with him, racing him and running with him."

Dionandre Perez, seven-years-old, was happy his step-father, (Major) was coming home.

"I'm going to beat him up," said the young boy. "I mean rough house with him. And beat him at PlayStation."

Not too much later, the police sirens on the cruisers escorting the busses home could be heard coming down the street. The signal was given that the busses were in sight and the roar of the crowd's cheers began to drown out the joyous wail of the sirens.

As the busses rounded the bend and came to a stop in front of the hundreds of family members gathered at the armory, the children's faces looked like Christmas and their birthdays had all come early, and on the same day.

And within moments, all the questions the kids had, and all the thoughts of beach balls, PlayStation and quads disappeared as the first thing the children of the 143rd Military Police Company really wanted to do was run to their loved ones, hug them and not let go.

The kids were all smiles.

They were finally home.



Alexis Moore shows her 143rd Military Police pride. (Photo by Spc. Joe Waller, 65th PCH)



Three-year-old Ryan Self was waiting for his father, Sgt. Todd Self, to return from duty in Iraq. While waiting, he amused himself with pebbles and fire trucks. (Photo by Spc. Joe Waller, 65th PCH)



Spc. Levi Saucier of the 143rd Military Police Company spends a few precious moment with some of the children in his life. (Photo by Spc. Joe Waller, 65th PCH)

A jointness in communications that's beyond words

LT. COL. PAMELA K. TITUS
JFHQ PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Gone are the days when a unit existed in a vacuum. An exercise at Camp Rowland on April 17 and 18 exemplified the use of efficiencies in talent and skills of the National Guard.

The 103^d Air Control Squadron conducted a communications exercise with the 128th ACS of Volk Field, Wisconsin and the 134th ACS of McConnell Air Force Base, Wichita, Kansas. The 103^d ACS operated remotely at Camp Rowland, Niantic, Conn. and the 128th ACS and 134th ACS each operated out of their home station via satellite.

The exercise included 500 members from the three squadrons.

"The joint training exercise is to simulate pre-hostility, war and peacekeeping activities in the region," said Maj. Joseph D. Hammer, director of operations for the exercise. The simulated region included Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait.

For the 103^d ACS, the training provided the opportunity to re-exercise the skills they used in war in Afghanistan from April 2003 to December 2003. The skills included air defense and battle management coordination such as operator identification of aircraft, controlling of air assets, close air support, refueling and coordination with higher headquarters.

Defined as a "hub and spoke" setup, the 103rd ACS acted as the hub with the 128th ACS and 134th ACS serving as spokes, providing information that the 103rd coordinated and disseminated.

Watching Lt. Col. Richard D. Erdmann and Hammer coordinating the event looked to be a well refined operation. The 103^d ACS team was divided among facilities in numerous mobile container type buildings, each in their own unique world.

One building had a team working on maintenance with training in encryption and power operations. They monitored friendly and hostile aircraft within their own region

and joined aircraft information in the other regions through data links from the 128th ACS and 134th ACS. The 103rd ACS team of Maj. Bill Neri, Capt. Guy Marino, Maj. Rob Buckingham, and 1st Lt. Dameon Kellogg worked battle management at the speed of a fast-paced air traffic control tower.

Moving to another building, Sr. Airman BJ Lawson, Master Sgt. Bryan DeMars, Staff Sgt. Robert , Schlubach, Staff Sgt. Raheem Reggler, and Tech. Sgt. Scott Dublinski worked on identification of enemy and friendly aircraft through data systems management with the data links from the other units. Capt. Glenn Sherman provided a touch of reality for the other building by creating simulated enemy aircraft that displayed on their screens and voice communications from the friendly aircraft.

"The sharpness is still there," said Hammer about his team who had served in Afghanistan. "The skills learned in combat haven't been lost. The equipment may be rusty, but the people aren't."

Moving beyond the mobile container buildings stood two large camouflage satellite dishes. These dishes provided dual functions, one of supporting the three ACS units and a second mission for an Army National Guard exercise for the 280th Signal Battalion Charlie Company of Connecticut and the 311th Signal Battalion of Virginia.

The support of the ACS provided systems training exercise for the operators. The STE provided point-to-point communications. The Army exercise enabled a team from ACS to provide replacement resources in New Castle, Delaware for Army members who were deployed. A truly joint operation, Connecticut Air National Guard members, Sr. Airman Paul Rolla, Tech. Sgt. Wayne Prior, Staff Sgt. Ryan Key and Staff Sgt. Ray Schmidt traveled to New Castle and work side-by-side with the Army National Guard team. The team in Connecticut was led by Master Sgt. Barry Jones.

"Charlie Company performed a signal



Army and Air Guardsmen work side-by-side during a communications exercise held at Camp Rowland. The exercise was in preparation for emergency situations and Grecian Fire Bolt 2004. (Photo courtesy Master Sgt. Juanita Hunt, 103rd ACS)



Communications equipment stands ready for a joint exercise conducted by Army and Air Guard members at Camp Rowland. (Photo courtesy master Sgt. Juanita Hunt)

mission," said Sgt. 1st Class Boyd Dunbar, NCOIC of the team. "The switching operation involved a line-of-sight microwave communications, providing voice and data."

Some of the team supporting the dual exercises included Pfc. Patrick Conner, Spc. Joshua O'Brien, Spc. Kristina Fouts and Staff Sgt. Doreen Head of Company C, 280th Signal Battalion, CTARNG.

The Army exercise is in preparation for a larger exercise, Grecian Fire Bolt, from June 12 to 26. This is a joint global communications exercise. Grecian Fire Bolt exercises the ability to provide local voice and data communications in the event of a

major national disaster. The 280th Signal Battalion provides the local short range communications with the 103^d ACS providing the long-haul communications link.

A key ingredient to the training wasn't the multiple unit involvement or the Air and Army National Guard participation. It went the beyond service rivalry to the incredible camaraderie between teams and among the team members that contributed to their success.

"There has been a big push for jointness and we've been doing it for more than 10 years," said Jones. "It's an Army and Air Force pride thing."

ORE - Roadmap to excellence

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The 103rd Fighter Wing conducted an Operational Readiness Exercise here March 22-28 to prepare for an upcoming inspection in May.

The exercise simulated mobilizing, processing and deploying unit personnel, aircraft and equipment during two phases to a forward location. Phase one entails preparing to leave and deploying, phase two is employment (combat operations) at the location.

For Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Robertson, munitions expeditor, 103rd Maintenance Squadron, the exercise provided an opportunity to train, as well as detect areas needing more attention.

"Our morale is real high, even though we are short handed," he said. His job is to ensure correct munitions are delivered on time to aircraft on the flight line. He said his delivery crews worked 15-hour days during the exercise.

"We have a few minor things to work on, but other than that I think we are going to do awesome," he said.

While "deployed" and flying sorties, the unit also had to defend itself against enemy attacks. In addition to performing his job, each airman had to also wear chemical warfare gear and provide first aid to the injured.

One of Robertson's drivers, Staff Sgt. Courtney Huntington, munitions systems journeyman, 103rd Maintenance Squadron, said she got used to wearing her "chem gear" pretty quickly.

"I learned how to be flexible and adapt to changes," she said.

Roughly 80 evaluators, some from the unit and others visiting from other Guard and Reserve units, graded the exercise, and deemed there was room for improvement.

"Some things were evaluated as less than satisfactory," said Col. Dan Scace, commander, 103rd Fighter Wing. "The good news is that we now know everything we need to fix, and have a plan to fix all of the critical areas before the ORI (Operational Readiness Inspection)."

Lt. Col. Rick Mitchell, command post chief, 103rd Fighter Wing, echoed the commander.

"We have a list of 26 action items that we wrote up ourselves," he said. "When we complete those I think we will get an outstanding."

In the command post, personnel "make sure the battle staff knows

what they need to know," said Master Sgt. Kelly Cloutier, command post superintendent, 103rd Fighter Wing.

In short, she said, they watch the entire battle and disseminate information to both the battle staff and higher headquarters.

"We make sure these guys have the right information to make the right decisions to keep us alive," she said.

Examples of such information she reports, she said, are enemy missiles inbound, or a pilot manning his aircraft could see green smoke. Either such report might elicit the battle staff to sound attack sirens, which often require base personnel to put on their gas masks, sometimes for long periods of time.

"They do not take those decisions lightly," she said.

Col. Fred Miclon, commander, 103rd Maintenance Group, after the exercise, reminded his troops that in 1995 the 103rd received the best A-10 ORI rating ever.

"Working hard from now till the ORI is over, thinking positively, and having a good attitude and sense of urgency will get us through with flying colors," Scace said.

The ORI is scheduled for May 17-25.



Donned in chem. suits, members of the 103rd Civil Engineering Squadron put the final touches on tents in their work area during the first phase of the Operation Readiness Exercise at Bradley Air National Guard Base March 22. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton)



Members of the 103rd Security Forces Squadron and the Exercise Evaluation Team conduct training with smoke grenades and ground burst simulators during the Operation Readiness Exercise at Bradley Air National Guard Base March 22. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton)

Airmen fight burner fire, avoid disaster

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Two 103rd Services Flight Airmen were recognized by the unit's safety personnel and given commemorative coins for the airmen's immediate reaction to a real-world fire during the unit's Operational Readiness Exercise on base March 26.

After Senior Airman Joshua A. Mead and Airman 1st Class Jared Abair, services apprentices, 103rd Services Flight, properly checked and lit an M-2 burner and were transporting it into the Mobile Kitchen Trailer, they noticed gas dripping from the unit. The airmen moved away from the MKT to inspect the burner and found flames underneath it, Mead said.

"I just took the fire extinguisher and put it out," Mead said.

"They did a great job through their quick reaction and they were able to avoid a big catastrophe," said Maj. Barbara C. Luhn, commander, 103rd Services Flight. "We're lucky nothing happened."

After presenting Mead with a safety coin, Chief Master Sgt. Raymond W. Welton, supervisor, 103rd Safety Office, said, "If the fire had been allowed to continue to burn, we may have lost the MKT or something even worse, as the MKT had many of our personnel in the facility."

An M-2 burner uses gasoline to heat food served in the MKT.



Chief Master Sgt. Raymond W. Welton, 103rd Safety Office, presents Senior Airman Joshua A. Mead, 103rd Services Flight, with a safety coin for his quick reaction in extinguishing a fire in the Mobile Kitchen Trailer during an ORE. Airman 1st Class Jared Abair, 103rd Services Flight helped Mead put out the fire. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton)

242nd holds the line

Sgt. Jeffrey Austin
65th PCH

Working in heavy rains and trudging through deep mud, Soldiers of Company A, 242nd Engineers trained in combat skills to prepare for the defense of the county and state.

The weekend’s mission was to have several squads erect a defensive position in a simulated combat environment and Stone’s Ranch Military Reservation.

“Our plan for this mission is dig support positions for the platoon and place weapons in positions to defend the fighting positions,” said Capt. Jeffrey T. Healy, company commander. The unit has also practiced setting up hasty fighting positions and using range cards.

According to Healy, the hasty fighting position is the first and immediate defensive position Soldiers would make when under artillery or small arms fire.

Hasty positions are usually first dug to approximately six inches into the ground.

Sector sticks are added to the fighting position to help remind the Soldiers of their firing sector.

A team of ten Soldiers with their team leader can cover an area of 150 meters.

Also, protective obstacles were placed at strategic locations to help provide further protection.

Squad Automatic Weapons (SAW) such as the M-60 were added for maximum protection against any enemy attack.

Range cards are used help provide Soldiers with the distance from either side of their sector to return fire.

The weekend actually started Friday night, April 2 when the advance party arrived and set-up tents for the Tactical Operations Center. (TOC)

On the morning of April 3, the main body left Norwalk at 8 a.m. for the radio tower area at Stone’s Ranch.

The unit began operations by first setting

up a 360-degree defensive perimeter around the TOC, according to Healy.

After the main body arrived, the platoon leaders had to prepare and present classes such as Company Defense, Security, M-8 Alarms and more.

“This training is excellent and everyone is excited about going to Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Fort Polk, La. for annual training schedule in June,” said 1st Lt. Chuck Taylor, Company A, 242nd Engineer Battalion, executive officer.

“Learning how to put up a TOC and building defensive positions is a good way to break into the engineers,” according to 2nd Lt. Jeffrey R. Samy, a platoon leader with the 242nd.

Besides attending classes about combat skills, Soldiers worked through the rain and deep mud to train on their newly acquired skills.

“This is the first time we are in the field this year,” said Healy. “Part of being in the Army is receiving good training for seasoned and new Soldiers in the unit. The company will also try to perform tasks that encourage individual teamwork.”

“The duty of a senior Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) is to provide for leadership and this weekend my job is to make sure all Soldiers are properly trained,” said Sgt. 1st Class Daniel R. Ferrucci, platoon sergeant.

“The junior NCOs will instruct individual courses and the senior NCOs will supervise, add comments and improvise the course work.”

“This weekend was very interesting,” said Pvt. Jameel K. Cromwell. “I was released from basic training just a few short weeks ago. This training is less stressful than basic but I’m learning a lot and enjoying my weekend here.”

“This is really great training. This will prepare me when I meet the rangers and special forces at JRTC,” said Pvt. Timothy J. Giunta.

Comptroller nominee says she’d target troop pay problems

Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

The presidential nominee tabbed to replace former DoD Comptroller Dov. S. Zakheim told a Senate committee April 27 that she’d look into pay problems that have plagued some National Guard members deployed overseas in the war against terrorism.

Appearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Capitol Hill, nominee Tina W. Jonas pledged to make it a “first priority” upon her confirmation to investigate why some deployed National Guard troops have experienced delayed or inaccurate paychecks.

Jonas has served as the FBI’s chief financial officer since Sept. 6, 2002. Before that, she was the deputy undersecretary of defense for financial management.

Colorado Sen. Wayne Allard pointed out to Jonas that a recent General Accounting Office report cited pay problems among some National Guardsmen being deployed overseas. Allard pointed out that many affected troops came from his state. The senator asked Jonas if she’d “get on top” of the issue.

Jonas responded she’d “be very happy

to look into” the pay issue. “There’s nothing more important than a paycheck for our men and women in uniform, and particularly the Guard issues,” she said.

Virginia Sen. John Warner, the committee chairman, observed to Jonas that DoD is expected to ask for more supplemental funding to prosecute the war on terror – specifically to fund military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He then noted that Jonas had previously told him she hadn’t worked with budget supplemental issues during her prior stint at the Pentagon.

The chairman said supplemental budget requests from the Defense Department are “critically important” to the war effort. “You just can’t anticipate with the certainty that’s necessary to put down in a presidential normal budget request what is needed,” he explained. Saying he supports the supplemental process as it is, and that he believes it will continue, he told Jonas she’d “be very much involved in the forthcoming supplemental.”

Jonas told the committee that, if confirmed, she’d continue efforts to modernize DoD’s financial accounting infrastructure, and that she’d investigate a troubled air tanker leasing program.



Sgt. Javier Correa and Cpl. William Buitrago of Company A, 242nd Engineer Battalion, raise camouflage netting for a vehicle (Photo by Sgt. Patrick Clark, 65th PCH)

1st Bn (OCS), 169th Regiment (LDR)
Officer Candidate School
Information Briefs:

DATES
15 MAY 04
26 JUN 04
21 AUG 04
25 SEP 04
23 OCT 04
20 NOV 04
11 DEC 04

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Bring a Friend, Spouse or Significant Other.
Information Brief will be in Building 402,
Leadership Hall, beginning at 1000 hours.
Uniform is BDU on duty, Civilian all others

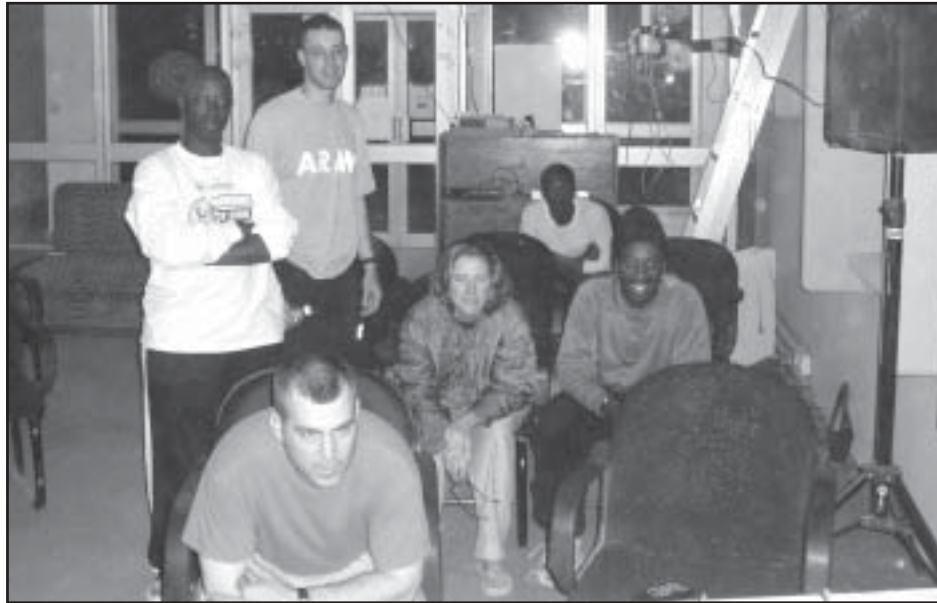
Rocket attack doesn't stop UCONN fans - even in war zone

SGT. 1ST CLASS WILLIAM APPLEBY
118TH MEDICAL BATTALION (AREA SUPPORT)

BALAD, Iraq 7 April 2004 – They set their clocks to go off two hours earlier, they even rescheduled unit PT until the afternoon of both days, and sat through a rocket attack during the Men's last game in full battle rattle so they could watch the finals of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Basketball season.

Soldiers of the Headquarters Detachment of the 118th Medical Battalion, based in Newington, Connecticut watched their University of Connecticut Men's and Women's programs run away with both championships. The unit who goes by the call-sign HUSKY after the UCONN's mascot, command and control health services throughout Iraq and have separate companies providing medical care from the Turkish border to the border with Kuwait, including the TMC on LSA Anaconda.

"Basketball is king in Connecticut", exclaimed SGT Joseph Phaneuf, of Eastford, his home only 15 minutes from the Storrs campus. "...and it was great to see Duke go down". Phaneuf was the first soldier up and prepared the unit's makeshift TV room for the other soldiers. When asked how he felt about getting two rocket attacks during the game he commented, "It pissed



Soldiers watch the last seconds of the UCONN Women's win over NCAA rival Tennessee for the national title. (Photo by Sgt. Maj. Kim Walker, 118th Medical Bn.)

me off. I missed game time running out to get my battle rattle. During the second attack, Georgia Tech was making their run."

Staff Sergeant Christopher McCarty, 32 of Meriden, added "It was good, we were back home for a few hours, in my living room with my friends, discussing what was on TV, something totally non-military. (The rocket attack) brought you back to the reality of where you were."

The State's National Guard has promised the unit UCONN NCAA flags and banners within the next few weeks and the unit will display them proudly on the walls of their headquarters building and the TMC.

The school put Connecticut on the map again this year and the soldiers of the 118th Med Bn will ensure that LSA Anaconda and Iraq remembers here who the kings are.



Soldiers of the 118th Medical Battalion (AS) watch the final game between UCONN's Huskys and Georgia Tech's Yellow Jacket during a rocket attack on LSA Anaconda. (Photo by Sgt. Maj. Kim Walker, 118th Medical Bn.)

Attention Soldiers, Airmen and Families

The Connecticut Guardian wants your photos!

If you have photos you wish to share with the rest of our Guard family, we would like to publish them in the Guardian.

We are looking for photos of soldiers and airmen who are deployed either relaxing or working. We are looking for photos of family members at home or at play. We are looking for photos of families packing care packages to send to their loved ones.

We will print them in the Guardian as space allows so they can be seen and shared by Connecticut Soldiers, Airmen and families around the world.

Please e-mail your photos to ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil

Congress begins reviewing spending proposals

Congress has considered several legislative proposals since Sept. 11, 2001, designed to help reservists and their families cope with activations, high operational and personnel tempo, family separations and shifts in annual income.

One of the most recent is Senate Bill 2068, the Guard and Reserve Enhanced Benefits Act of 2004.

The bill expands benefits beyond those outlined in President Bush's \$401 billion proposed 2005 Department of Defense budget.

It calls for providing child-care assistance grants, expanding Montgomery GI Bill benefits, deferring student loan payments, reducing the age for drawing Reserve retirement pay and expanding Tricare coverage regardless of employment or insurance status.

The bill also allows employers to claim up to \$12,000 in tax credits for the pay differential of National Guard and Reserve employees.

"Congress will begin its markup of the president's budget for DOD in early May," said Wayne Gracie, director of policy integration in the Office of the Air Force Reserve.

"It will take a close look at (the bill) and other proposals. Some of the provisions have been recommended before and have not been enacted into law."

In its review, one major factor that Congress will take into account is the number of mobilized reservists.

As of April 27, DOD officials reported that more than 170,000 reservists and National Guardsmen were mobilized.

Of that number, more than 5,400 were reservists in Air Force Reserve Command.

If the president's budget for fiscal 2005 is enacted, the Air Force Reserve would receive \$3.788 billion to train, equip, organize and administer about 76,000 reservists.

This request comprises \$2.24 billion for operation and maintenance, \$1.464 billion for reservists and \$84 million for military construction.

"We won't know what's included in the final authorization and appropriations bills until probably later this summer," Mr. Gracie said.

"A lot can happen between now and when the president signs a spending or authorization bill into law."

(Courtesy of AFRC News Service)

Connecticut's 102nd Army National Guard Band performs missions to excellence in Germany

SGT. TOMASZ DURNIK
102nd ARMY BAND

Privileged and honored to be spending two weeks of Annual Training period in Heidelberg, Germany, the 102nd Army National Guard Band of Connecticut was successful in the execution of several high profile missions.

Arriving on Saturday, March 13, the band spent most of the week rehearsing; participating in classes on safety and terrorism; and getting acquainted with the customs and sights that lie within the city of Heidelberg.

One of the missions that 11 Soldiers from the 102nd were fortunate to take part in was the change of command ceremony to NATO's Joint Command Center, at Campbell Barracks. USAREUR (United States Army Europe) Commanding General B. B. Bell assumed command saying, "We will continue to embrace change", as he accepted command represented by a flag that was passed to him from Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces North Europe, General Gerhard W. Back.

Only having one full day to learn the marching and playing techniques used by the full time 33rd USAREUR Band, Soldiers from the 102nd were overwhelmed with the immense importance of performing for such an important event. Spc. Nathan Swagger says it best, "N-A-T-O, it doesn't get any bigger than this."

There were a few awkward moments and

slip-ups throughout the rehearsals, but when taken to the parade grounds, the band's performance was flawless. Standing directly on the opposite side of the parade field from Germany's own Army Band, the two alternated pre-ceremonial charts and honors throughout the morning.

Standing there watching other nations' colors flap in the wind while speeches were read, and with our own red, white and blue centered in the field, one cannot express the warmth that engulfs the heart at such a moment. Listening to the speeches that praised democratic values and freedom for all nations; all of us can say how lucky we are to be Americans.

Meanwhile, back at the barracks, the



The 102nd Army National Guard Band of Connecticut spent its annual training period performing many ceremonial duties in Germany. (Photo courtesy of 102nd ARNG Band)

remaining members of the 102nd were busy preparing for a performance of their own. Assigned a mission for 0600 Friday, they were challenged to take full advantage of their musical talents as several musicians were needed to play instruments outside of their MOS in order to fill holes in sections to compensate for the 11 members on the other job. One of the duties that the 102nd came to Germany for was to perform for Soldiers as they prepared to head home after completing their tour of combat.

Before sunrise, approximately 100 Soldiers of the 1st Armored Division, 366th, arrived at an Air Force base in Ramstein after fulfilling their mission in Iraq. They were greeted by 28 members of Connecticut's own 102nd ARNG Band, who performed a heartfelt welcome home ceremony in their honor. Lead by Commander CW2 Cummings, 1st Sgt. Bonville and Sgt. 1st Class Theriault, the band was greatly appreciated for their outstanding efforts and cheered on as they played tunes such as the Theme from Rocky, La Bamba, and the UConn Husky fight song. The Theme to Jeopardy was played as Soldiers passed by the Amnesty Box.

Friday, March 19, was also the day the V Corps Soldiers were officially welcomed home from Operation Iraqi Freedom. At a ceremony once again at Campbell Barracks, the combined 33rd and 102nd performed for the Soldiers who were proudly given a tenth battle streamer for historic excellence, dating back to 1918. Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, V Corps commanding general, proudly stated to his troops, "You inspired the world with

your dedication to duty, your fighting spirit, and your benevolence".

To march on the parade field in front of thousands of high profile military dignitaries, which included our own Maj. Gen. Cugno, it was an honor to be part of the welcoming as the V Corps Soldiers were reunited with friends and family. The band performed a number of pre-ceremonial pieces; a series of bugle calls; a march for inspection; and a "Pass in Review". Lined up directly in front of the reviewing stand, the band ended the ceremony by playing the Army Song, and executed a left turn off the parade field to a roaring crowd of energized spectators.

Excited to share our experience of the past two days with fellow band members, we returned back to the barracks, changed and readied ourselves for a Unit dinner, joined by Cugno. Cummings had picked a wonderful German restaurant in the center of Heidelberg as the site for our dinner. He had reserved a private room where most of the unit ate and enjoyed each others' company, while taking the opportunity to shake hands and speak with Cugno. It was quite a surprise to see his face, happy that we, the band representing Connecticut, were doing our part to bring honor and a grand sense of pride, not only to our state, but to the entire United States Army and the country we are sworn to protect.

While we were at dinner, the 102nd Army Band Combo performed for the 39th Finance Battalion for a dining out party located in Hanau, Germany. The 102nd has worked hard over the past few years to polish a variety of performing groups to include: concert band, jazz band, combo and brass quintet. As a result, the band now has the ability to perform for a variety of special events.

The 102nd Army National Guard Band is based out of Bristol, Connecticut and is currently at 100 percent strength.

For more information
on joining the band or to
request a performance,
contact the unit at
(860) 524-4965.



Eleven Soldiers of the 102nd ARNG Band played during the NATO Joint Command Center during change of command ceremonies for Gen. B. B. Bell (USAREUR).

The Army stands a little taller

Phase 1 Advanced and Basic Noncommissioned Officers Courses graduate 70 Soldiers

SPC. JESSE J. STANLEY JR.
65TH PCH

The backbone of the Army got stronger April 25 when 70 soldiers graduated from the Phase I Advanced and Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course at Camp Rowland. With the Global War on Terrorism ongoing and the active role of the Connecticut National Guard this class shall have a challenging future as NCOs. Their new skills shall surely be put to the test.

As the Soldiers of the 2004 graduating ANCOC and BNCOC classes were congratulated by a large gathering of family, friends and fellow Soldiers, they were in high spirits, extremely motivated and full of the warrior spirit that the NCO attempts to instill in others.

ANCOC and BNCOC prepare the Soldiers for duties they shall have to perform as senior NCOs. It instills in them greater leadership skills and the tools they will require to lead their soldiers in today's Army.

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, Adjutant General, spoke to the assembled Soldiers.



Sgt. Anthony Tirado stands at attention while waiting to enter the pavilion at Camp Rowland for his graduation from the BNCOC. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)

"Your commitment to your Soldiers is never questioned," he said. "Your commitment to mission is unprecedented. Here you are once again in your career honing your leadership skills, taking that next step in your development."

Each Soldier then received a diploma certifying their completion of their respective courses.

Several Soldiers and instructors were recognized for excellence during the ceremony.

In the BNCOC course Sgt. Mark Degennaro was awarded the Army Achievement Medal and the Sergeants Major Council Award for excellence in academics, leadership and physical fitness.

Sgt. Marissa M. Justo was recognized for her excellence in academics.

Staff Sgt. Mark Wotring was recognized for his excellence in physical fitness with a score of 264 out of a possible 300 on the PT test.

Staff Sgt. Keith Egan was recognized as the outstanding BNCOC instructor by the 2nd General Studios Battalion Cadre.

In the ANCOC course Staff Sgt. Steven Barrieault was awarded the Army Achievement Medal and the Maj. Gen. E. Donald Walsh Award

for excellence in academics, leadership and physical fitness.

Staff Sgt. Thomas Silveria was recognized for his excellence in academics.

Staff Sgt. Michael Preble was recognized for his excellence in physical fitness with a score of 297 out of a possible 300 on the PT test.

Sgt. 1st Class Porfidio Torres Jr. was recognized as the outstanding ANCOC instructor by the 2nd General Studios Battalion Cadre.

Barrieault was also presented with the NCO sword. This is the first time that the sword has been presented to an ANCOC graduate.

Barrieault will carry the sword for one year and then present it to the ANCOC honor graduate during next year's graduation ceremony.

The sword was designed to give greater prestige to the US Army NCO Corps and was created in 1840.

It was carried by NCOs during the Mexican War, Civil War and Spanish American War.

The sword is used today in ceremonies. Historically it was noted that the soul of the matter, pointing toward the enemy and directing soldiers during battle.

The tradition of the NCO sword is now alive again at Camp Rowland.

The 70 Soldiers departed Camp Rowland



Sgt. Mark Degennaro receives the Army Achievement Medal from Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)

standing a little taller and carried themselves with a little more confidence.

They in turn strengthen the backbone of the Army so that it can continue to shoulder the responsibilities of fighting today's Global War on Terrorism and defend the freedoms we have here.



Staff Sgt. Steven Barrieault receives the NCO Sword from State Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Zastaury, as Col. James Caporizo and Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno look on. This was the first time the NCO Sword was presented to the Honor Student of the ANCOC. (Photo by Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)

FOCUS: Installations to serve as flagships

SGT. 1ST CLASS MARCIA TRIGGS

Editor's note: This is the fourth in a weekly series of articles on Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker's focus areas.

"We have pledged to rid the Army of Camp Swampy — substandard installations," said Geoffrey Prosch, the acting assistant secretary of the Army for Installations and Environment.

When Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker announced that "Installations as Flagships" would be one of the Army's 16 immediate focus areas, there were already more than 74,000 people working the issue, Prosch said.

The Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management vowed in 2002 to improve installation business practices by cutting out layers of bureaucracy, and managing its \$15 billion budget through one agency, Prosch said.

Spacious barracks rooms with walk-in closets and homes with garages and driveways had already been built. They are good examples of how ACSIM was working to improve where Soldiers work, train and their families live, Prosch said.

To end the impression that there are "have and have-not installations," all Army posts will operate under Installation Design Standards, a written policy that will outline what the minimum standards are, officials said.

"Right now we are in the process of developing an implementation plan for the Installation Design Standards," said Lt. Col. Paul Mason, chief of the Transformation team for ACSIM.

"The design standards will give installations a framework for building or renovating billeting, setting up force protection, and landscaping. Installations will then initiate their own Installation Design

Guides based on the standards we outlined in the IDS," Mason said.

The endeavor is not to make all installations the same, Prosch said, but to ensure consistent quality among Army installations.

The Army Community and Family Support Center is also playing a part by placing family services and Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs on a level plateau, Mason said. Everything from the Child Development Center to the post gym will be managed to standard, he added.

Soldiers should share the same quality of life as those they have pledged to defend, Mason said. By improving the installation infrastructure, the Army is recruiting and retaining Soldiers and their families, he added.

Residential Communities Initiative, the Army's housing privatization plan, is one of the best things the Army has done for its

Soldiers, said Prosch, who spent 31 years as an infantry officer. There are currently 26 RCI contracts serving 31 installations. By 2007, RCI contracts will be awarded to improve 80 percent of the Army housing, Prosch added.

"We're not just building row houses, we're building communities," Prosch said. "We have put an equity investment of \$335 million into RCI, and our private partners have been able to borrow \$7.2 billion. We would not have been able to obtain that type of money through military construction dollars from Congress."

Other future plans to improve billeting on post are to spend \$1 billion to upgrade

lodging facilities for Soldiers who are on temporary duty or in-processing and to upgrade the barracks for Soldiers who are deployed.

"When Soldiers come home from a deployment, we want to make sure they see improvements," Mason said. "A time schedule is being reviewed, but it has not been determined if the renovation will take place for the Soldiers who are participating in the second rotation of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the fifth rotation of Operation Enduring Freedom."

Installations must be resourced to be holistic communities and secure sanctuaries, but also deployment platforms with robust reach-back capabilities, officials said.

"We do not want our installations to be choke points for mobilizing troops. Our goal is to design an area that will house all the organizations that fall under the deployment process."

Lt. Col. Paul Mason

The Army exists to fight and win wars, Prosch said. The job of ACSIM is to ensure that the installations have the

resources to deploy its active-duty, and mobilize and demobilize its reserve troops, he said.

"There is currently a plan to revise the number of mobilization sites, Mason said.

"We do not want our installations to be choke points for mobilizing troops," Mason said. "Our goal is to design an area that will house all the organizations that fall under the deployment process."

"Deploying Soldiers is one of our focuses, but training is also an installation's core," Mason said. "Ranges will evolve from single-use, stand-alone platforms to be able to support both

individual and collective training simultaneously."

Mason said Soldiers should start to see more live and virtual training in fiscal years 2007 or 2008. With the Installation Management Agency focusing on the post facilities, commanders can focus on training and war fighting, Mason added.

While Soldiers are training for a war, ACSIM will continue to outsource non-war-fighting functions, such as utilities, to private industry because they have the expertise and money, Prosch said.

As of Oct. 1, funds for installations started going directly to the garrison commanders to be used for their intended purposes, instead of being funneled down through major commands, Prosch said. Installations may find that they still don't have enough money. But, at least the money will be accounted for, and it will be easier to justify to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Congress why more money is needed, he said.

IMA has seven regions, but there is only one banker, Prosch said. The IMA headquarters is located in Virginia, and there are four regions located stateside and three located overseas.

"In the year that we've been open, we've been able to save money and get a standard quality of work by obtaining contracts to cover whole regions," Prosch said. "We've regionally contracted security guards, furniture renovation and building demolition as examples."

Army leadership knows the importance of installations, Mason said. The changes that are taking place are not merely enhancements or band-aid fixes, he said. New and fresh approaches are being taken to make installations efficient and effective worldwide, Mason added.

The continuing history of the first and oldest Air Control Squadron in the Air Force inventory

SR. MASTER SGT. JOHN D. CUOMO
103RD ACS

The first Annual Field Training exercise of the 103rd AC&W Squadron was on August 22 thru Sept. 5, 1948. This encampment was held at the three home stations; Smith's Point of Milford, Trumbull Airport at Groton, and Hammonasset.

Supplies for the unit during this encampment were flown to Bridgeport Airport in Stratford from Brainard field in Hartford by C-47 transport planes. As a training activity, these planes were also used to track and monitor the unit. The unit had twin towers that were each 35 feet high. Each tower had a radar antenna screen on it with the rest of the equipment apparatus housed in a building below.

Men who were not on duty at 1700 were granted passes in order to visit their families if they lived in the area. Those on pass had to return to camp by midnight.

An open house was held during the encampment to educate the public on what the unit did and to help recruit new members. One of the individuals who attended the training exercise was Charles Duncan who stayed with the unit until the mid 1980's.

Another person attending the open house was George Damato, who left the AC&W Sq. in the early years to go to the Fighter Group. Damato later served on to State Staff where he retired after 41 years with the Air National Guard.



Summer encampment at Milford in 1948 trained in many areas. Lt. Doolittle, Pvt. Tallarico, Sgt. Sable, Pvt. McDermott plotting aircraft on grid overlay of mapped Long Island air space.

Bring Your Child to Work Day teaches military children about what their parents do day-to-day

MAGDALENA WIDOMSKI
DAUGHTER OF ALEKSANDRA WIDOMSKI
CONNECTICUT MILITARY DEPARTMENT

"They're adorable!" "Look at them!" "They look just like you!"

These are just some examples of the responses from employees to fellow co-workers when they met each other's children and grandchildren.

The National Guard sponsored a "Bring Your Child to Work Day" on April 22, organized by Senior Master Sgt. Kevin Salsbury and Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton. It was a day filled with excitement for both parents and their children.

Before getting on a bus and setting out for a fun-filled day, children of all ages got to watch their parents at their best: working. When asked what she thought of their father's job in the Office of Emergency Management, Danielle and Kyle Walsh said, "It's cool. He works for communications."

After about an hour of work, everyone assembled together in the gymnasium to meet the rest of the group. We were greeted by Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno and received nice goodie bags filled to the top with cool things. With a party of about forty, this year's group was one of the largest we've ever had.

We hit the bus with our new friends and headed to our first destination: The New England Air Museum.

Each group got a clipboard with questions about aviation and the aircrafts displayed in the museum. In the end, a complete sheet won you either a foam helicopter, airplane puzzle or a poster. It was a very educational trip.

"The most important thing I learned was how planes work," explains Grant Lewis.

For lunch, Subway provided us with two gigantic six-foot grinders! We dined on our choice of turkey or ham grinders, chips and soda. It was a great time to catch up with our pals and share our new knowledge of aviation.

Soon, we once again loaded the bus and were off to Starbase, an educational yet entertaining program for youth. Each faculty member went under a code name, which made it all the more delightful. The agenda for our time there consisted of learning about flight on the computer and in a classroom environment.

Our leader, Warthog, split everyone up into three groups. Each group would rotate to different stations. In turn, everyone got together to play a computer game called Flight Simulator.

Ladybug, our instructor, taught us how to play the game. Grant Lewis, and the Rosado sisters, Samantha and Jacquelyn, all agree that this was the best part of the trip. They all said that they enjoyed playing with the cool controllers; you didn't have to press buttons on these!

While one group played the aviation game,

another followed instructions in order to create gliders.

Liberty, the teacher, took us through a step-by-step process to make wonderful gliders that really fly. Even though everyone was on different steps at different times, everyone ended up with a great souvenir to take home.

My favorite part of the day was the Pipeline Challenge and the Chicken Game. Catbird, our leader, gave each of us a pipe. We had to get an eye ball, an egg, and a marble from one point to another.

Trust me, it's not as easy as it seems. Our team's self-appointed leader, Daniel Laraia, told each of us exactly what to do. Under his instruction, we got our challenge done in less than ten minutes and were able to move onto the Chicken Game.

In the Chicken Game, one person stood in the middle of a field and was the Lighthouse. Another person was blindfolded and was the Boat. Everyone else stood behind a line and tried to tell the Lighthouse which way to guide the Boat- but they couldn't say a word. It was an awesome game of charades with some confusion and tons of fun.

In the hard times Americans face today, not many people realize what goes on behind all the fighting.

Going to work with relatives who work for the military but who are not currently in war zones has helped us understand more about the behind-the-scenes work.

Of course, we also appreciate the Soldiers who are taking risks and fighting for us. "I think it's cool," Sarah Teeter says, describing her father's job as a Soldier. "He protects the country."

The most important thing I learned was the strength of teamwork. As Warthog said, "A team is two or more people working together for a common goal."

This is especially true of the military. Everyone works together to make America a better place. I must say that after seeing how hard each person at the Hartford Armory works, I am especially proud to be a military kid!



Children of Connecticut Guard members and employees of the State Military Department take the Pipeline Challenge. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)



Two of the younger children get excited looking at the airplanes at the New England Air Museum. (Photo by Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)



The Chicken Game was a hit with the children and taught the importance of teamwork. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)

Record of Connecticut Men in the War of Rebellion

Editor’s Note: This is the sixth monthly installment of the history of Connecticut’s service in the Civil war, as published in the RECORD OF SERVICE OF CONNECTICUT MEN IN THE WAR OF REBELLION, 1861 TO 1865, from the History of the Second Connecticut Volunteers written by Gen. James B. Coit, Private IN Co. B. (Transcribed by Staff Sergeant Brett W. Wilson, Administrative Assistant to the USPFO for Connecticut)

IV. HISTORY AS A REGIMENT March, 1864—August, 1866

The regiment opened the battle of Winchester, September 19th, crossing the Opequan at dawn, and driving the enemy at a gallop until the first line of rebel earthworks was in sight. Then, the whole brigade in line, the First Connecticut in the center, charged magnificently up the slope, and with a yell went over the breastworks, man and horse together, capturing 100 prisoners by the way. The brigade held this position till our infantry came up, and was then put on our extreme left, where towards night the division made a grand charge against the flank of the retreating enemy, driving all before it for miles. On the 21st, at Front Royal, the division forced a passage across the Shenandoah in face of the enemy, and with one charge scattered them in wild confusion. All movements were performed at a gallop in the open fields and under the eye of the commanding general, and the First Connecticut gained the credit of being “better handled and manoeuvred than any other regiment in the division.” The regiment joined in the pursuit of Early to Harrisonburgh, and then, September 26th-29th, took part in Torbett’s destructive raid to Staunton and Waynesboro. October 1st, Wilson was sent west, and Custer was put in command of the division. The troops now retired down the valley. October 17th found the regiment on picket at Cedar Bun Church. Rosser dashed in at night with two brigades, hoping to surprise the division in camp, but though he captured Major Marcy and thirty men, was defeated in his plans through the stout resistance of the men on guard.

Concerning the renowned battle of Cedar Creek, October 19th, General Sheridan says: “I attribute the breaking up of the main line of the enemy as it was falling back, to the charge around the left flank by the cavalry under General Custer.” The First Connecticut, under Captain French, led that charge, dispersing the enemy’s cavalry, and with the help of reinforcements, driving it across Cedar Creek, thus opening the way for the rest of the division to the half a hundred guns, and “many wagons, prisoners, and flags that it captured, and which were as truly trophies of the First Connecticut as of any other regiment. The regiment was now for weeks constantly on the alert. November 12th, under Captain Rogers, in a reconnaissance across Cedar Creek, it had a sharp fight with Rosser, was nearly surrounded, but receiving reinforcements, drove him and returned victorious with a

loss of thirty men, including Captain Rogers, wounded. Lieutenant-Colonel Ives now arrived and assumed command. The winter was a hard one. November 24th a man froze to death at night in his tent. December 19th-22d the regiment, temporarily under Major Whitaker, marched with the division 120 miles in four extremely cold days, gallantly repulsed a fierce night attack in an ice-covered bivouac at Lazy Springs, and returned to camp with fifty frost-bitten men; and on February 4th-5th, fifty picked men of the regiment, with 250

prevailed and the shells crashed fearfully through the ice-covered trees. The flanking party, the First Connecticut, led by Major Goodwin, being on the right, charged with great enthusiasm; at the same time the division advanced; the enemy broke, and 1,303 prisoners, 150 wagons, eleven guns, and eighteen battle flags were ours, won wholly by Custer’s division, and largely by the flank attack led by a First Connecticut officer, and fought in good part by First Connecticut men. The next day the

command was at Charlottesville and marched thence eastward, working untold destruction on railroads, bridges, and canals. Near Ashland, March 14th, Longstreet attempted to intercept Sheridan, but was discovered by Lieutenant-Colonel Whitaker, who, taking Captain Neville’s squadron of the First Connecticut, drove the rebel skirmishers at a gallop, and uncovered their infantry. Sheridan then avoided battle by recrossing the North Anna. In this spirited charge the squadron lost seventeen men, including the brave and genial Lieutenant Clark, who was killed. He was one of the original battalion and universally beloved. The command was at White House March 21st and before Petersburg on the 27th. Here Colonel Ives, who had been absent recruiting, rejoined the regiment, which, at sunrise, April 1st, was at Five Forks. There had already been much fighting here, but without success. The brigade, dismounted, made a resolute attack, but was repulsed. Among the lost here was Captain Parmelee, one of the bravest of the brave, killed by a shell while gallantly leading his men. The battle raged fiercely. In the afternoon our lines charged twice without avail. The third time they were successful, capturing 6,000 prisoners and many guns and flags. “In this memorable battle,” writes General Custer, “the First Connecticut achieved the honor of being the first to leap the enemy’s breastworks, seize his cannon, and turn them on the retreating foe.” The two guns thus gallantly captured by the First Connecticut were the only ones taken at that time by Custer’s division. For two days they pursued the flying enemy. On the 3d, at Sweat House Creek, the division had a sharp engagement, but soon won victory. On the 7th the First Connecticut led the advance. It attacked Lee’s wagon train near Harper’s Farm, and routing the guard, separated; Colonel Ives with the right battalion charged a battery in the woods defended by infantry, and captured five guns with caissons, men; and horses, and two battle-flags; Major Moorehouse with the left battalion went towards the head of the train, capturing men, horses, and mules, and burning wagons; but the enemy being reinforced, the regiment retired with its splendid trophies. About 3 P. M. the brigade was ordered to charge the enemy’s breastworks mounted. It gallantly galloped forward, only to be terribly repulsed. Colonel Ives’s horse was shot under him, and the dead of the First Connecticut lay nearest the enemy’s works. At sunset these same works were again attacked in force and 5,000 prisoners captured. On the 9th Sheridan saw that the end was near. He had cut off the enemy’s way of retreat and was just advancing to a grand final charge. A flag of truce appeared asking a cessation of hostilities. Under it Lieutenant-Colonel Whitaker of the First Connecticut, Custer’s chief of staff, entered the rebel lines, and with General Longstreet (acting at Lee’s request), made the negotiation which stopped the fighting. Soon after, the regiment itself was detailed to escort General Grant when he went to receive Lee’s surrender. These two unique events were glory enough for one day. The remaining story is short. The regiment went nearly to Danville with Sheridan, but on Johnston’s surrender, marched back to Washington, where it took part in the grand review, and was found so excellent as to be selected for provost duty in the city, where it remained until August. A battalion of it was sent to Gettysburg at the laying of the cornerstone of the soldiers’ monument there July 4, 1865. On its muster-out it was allowed to return to its State mounted, a privilege granted to no other regiment in the service. It was discharged at New Haven, August 18, 1865, almost three years and ten months from the date of its first encampment at West Meriden. Its record is a noble one on an honor to itself and to the State that sent it out.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST REGIMENT C. V. CAVALRY <small>(PRINTED BY RYF. BROS. AND CRAFT'S BLANKET, LATE OF THE REGT. FIRST C. V. CONN.)</small>															
Casualties First Regiment C. V. Cavalry															
	Field and Staff	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	Unassigned	Total
Killed		6	2	3	2	2	1	3		4	4	1	1	1	30
MIA		5		1	1						2	1			10
Fatally Wounded		1		2	2		1	1	2						9
Wounded	3	15	13	1	12	4	4		13	4	7	3	2		91
Captured	2	26	33	16	21	41	16	13	23	45	17	38	13		304
Died in prison		6	10	1	4	11	6		7	15	9	17	3		89
Died of disease		4	5	7	3	4	5	7	5	6	13	4	8	3	74
Discharged for disability		26	27	24	29	16	8	7	7	10	7	5	7	17	190
Unaccounted for at muster-out			1	1				1		1					4
Accidentally shot		1													1
Accidentally wounded									1				1		2
Total	5	90	91	66	74	78	41	32	58	85	59	69	35	21	804
<i>Editor's Note: This is the sixth monthly installment of the history of Connecticut's service in the Civil war, as published in the RECORD OF SERVICE OF CONNECTICUT MEN IN THE WAR OF REBELLION, 1861 TO 1865. (Transcribed by Staff Sergeant Brett W. Wilson, Administrative Assistant to the USPFO for Connecticut).</i>															

others from the division, all under the same officer, then on Custer’s staff, marched over the Alleghanies to within four miles of Moorefield, 140 miles in forty-eight hours, half within the enemy’s lines, and capturing the noted Harry Gilmore in bed, brought him back a prisoner.

The first step towards Appomattox Court House was taken by Sheridan February 27, 1865, when committing his winter quarters to the flames, and with bands playing and flags flying, he started on his great raid from Winchester to Petersburg via Waynesboro, which place he reached March 2d, Custer’s division in the advance. Here were Early’s headquarters. The enemy were strongly posted on a ridge with artillery. They must be dislodged. The First Connecticut and two other regiments were assigned to Lieutenant-Colonel Whitaker for this purpose. They were secretly put on the rebel left flank and dismounted in mud knee-deep. An ice storm

Connecticut Military Department News

Second Company Governor's Horse Guard celebrates 2004 recruit class graduation

2nd LT. ROBERT DAHM
2nd Co. GHG

The Second Company Governor's Horse Guard held a military Graduation Ceremony last month at its Headquarters located at the barn opposite the old Fairfield Hills Hospital Campus.

The current seven-member recruit class received their Diplomas after completing a six-month basic training course which included horsemanship skills.

The training which began in October included training in Military Drill, CPR and First Aid, Tack, Cavalry Drill, Military Courtesy, Care and Grooming of the Horse and Troop Operations, among other topics as well. The graduates will now ride with the Troop on Thursday night drill nights in preparation for parades as well as the Troop's famous "Musical Ride".

Graduation ceremonies included the old



Troopers in formation receive their diplomas and rank insignia, pictured from left to right are Major Janis Arena and Private Lisa Plucinski in right foreground.

cavalry tradition of celebrating the event by opening a champagne bottle with a Trooper's saber. After presentation of Diplomas in formation, the Graduates attended a reception

in the Headquarters building with family and friends.

The 2004 Class of graduates includes: Pamela P. Berlekovic, Kimberly R. FitzGerald, Frank Markut, Kim Hedges, Lisa Plucinski, Bill Alletzhauser and Christine Johnson.

Maj. Janis Arena, (the commandant of the Troop) congratulated the recruits and welcomed them as new "Privates." "It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to get this far," said Major Arena and "it cannot be possible without the support and understanding of family and friends." Working with horses takes an immense amount of time, understanding, patience and dedication as Troopers can easily spend more than 500-600 volunteer hours per year at the Troop.

Band members sought for 2nd Co. Governor's Foot Guard

The 2nd Co. Governor's Foot Guard band has launched a recruiting drive for new instrumentalists.

With the band at 80 percent capacity, "we're working to fill the other 20 percent," said Staff Sgt. Ralph Sherman, band conductor.

The band exists in several forms. As a marching band, members perform at reviews and in parades. The concert band performs at indoor and outdoor concerts and the 18-piece dance band plays at social events and outdoor festivals. All rehearsals are held at the Goffe Street Armory in New Haven.

Instrumentalists who would like to audition may contact Sherman at (860) 561-0695, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



1st SGT. (RET.) RONALD E. LEE, USAR (RET.)
CT-ESGR PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

We were saddened to receive the news about Sgt. Felix Del Greco, the first Connecticut National Guard casualty in Iraq. The continuing loss of life and casualties sustained by American forces as a result of the insurgent's resistance to the American occupation is both tragic and may be somewhat disheartening and everyone at CT-ESGR sends their sincere condolences to Sgt. Del Greco's family and to the entire Connecticut National Guard.

There is one important step that all service members can take to improve their military career and family relationship... "Become an Effective Communicator".

You may wonder why this suggestion is appearing in this publication or is of any concern to the CT-ESGR Committee. The answer to that lies in the fact that ESGR is here to help you in any way possible. It is recognized that members of the National Guard and Reserve Components face a myriad of problems as of result of their "Citizen/Soldier" status. You have to balance your military life with your personal life at home and at work. As you have probably heard in ESGR briefings, most members of the Guard and Reserve quit serving for one of three reasons: 1) they are having problems at home; 2) they are having problems at work; or 3) they have

Effective communication aids career, home

decided that the military life is just not for them.

Outside of our support, counseling and understanding, there is not too much the ESGR can do to help you decide to stay in the military if you really don't like that style of life. We can assist you, if you ask, with problems you may have in your civilian job which result from your membership in the Guard or Reserves. We cannot directly intervene in your personal family problems, but we can help in another way...by supporting you and getting you "to become an effective communicator!" You'll see what this means later.

Webster's Dictionary defines the verb communicate as: "to exchange ideas through speech, writing, or signal." Looking at this definition, you must realize that the key concept is "to exchange ideas". This takes two parts, you and the entity you are trying to 'communicate' with. You must deliver the idea to the other person or persons and they must receive and understand it. They should then 'communicate' this receipt and understanding back to you to complete the circle. There is no such thing as a "One-way Communication"!

Again you may ask, "Why is this an ESGR concern?" The answer is that most problems dealt with by an ESGR Ombudsman involve ineffective communication at some point. Either the employer has not received and/or understood what you are doing regarding the military or what their rights and

obligations are or you have not fulfilled your duty by communicating effectively to them the "who, what, when and where" of your Guard or Reserve duty.

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects you from discriminatory acts by your employer based on your service in the Guard or Reserve. USERRA also places obligations upon you to give notice to your employer concerning when you will be absent from your job to perform military duty. You must ensure that your employer knows (and understands) when you will be absent for drills, training, AT, ADT, or call-up for extended active duty. This notice must be given in a *timely manner*. You can meet this obligation by giving a copy of your Yearly Training Calendar (YTC), your training schedule or, at a minimum, a letter from your military supervisor detailing when and for how long you will be required to perform military duty. If there are changes to the drill schedule or training dates, you should advise your employer as soon as possible. On the other side of the coin, if your employer has some valid reason that he/she needs you at work during one of your scheduled drills, etc. that should be communicated to you and you should discuss this with your military supervisor. You may possibly be excused and allowed to work at your civilian job and make up the military time later. The key here is "effective communication" between you, your employer and your military supervisor. If all three of you openly and effectively

communicate, the majority of problems may be eliminated.

Getting back to the earlier reference to your personal and family life, the same applies here. You must ensure that you family, your spouse or significant other, knows *what* you do in the Guard or Reserve, *why* you do it, and *when*. Especially in these days of activation of the Guard and Reserve Components to supplement the active military in the fight against terrorism, those closest to you need to understand why you are doing what you do. You should hold your head high and be proud to explain that you are a Patriot and that you are serving your Country in order to protect them and to ensure their freedom. How can anyone not be supportive of that! Communication is a valuable skill. *effective communication* is priceless! We should all resolve "To Become an Effective Communicator". Once effective communication is developed all sorts of family problems can be addressed and it will also help you to get through the tough times such as this, the loss of a friend and brother.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns or if we can be of any assistance, please contact your CT-ESGR Military Unit Liaison or Ombudsman or the CT-ESGR office at 196 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT.

The bus stops here: Families wait for

Pfc. JORDAN E. WERME
65th PCH

When the buses rolled onto the asphalt of the Army Aviation Support Facility at Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, a tremor of applause swelled into an uproar of cheers.

Company G, 104th Aviation Battalion, was officially home. And the hundreds of family members and friends that showed up to welcome their Soldiers home were only too happy to shout out their love and support.

"I couldn't be happier," said Barbara Dettore, "It's like the first day I laid eyes on that little bugger." Mrs. Dettore's son, Staff Sgt. Edward Dettore, 34, a flight engineer for the 104th, was among the Soldiers who returned to Connecticut on April 25th, after a 14-month deployment to Afghanistan.

Dettore's parents were among a group of 30 family members who turned out to welcome him home.

"The most important thing is his wife and children," said Mrs. Dettore. "All I want is a hug. You couldn't give me a million dollars to miss that hug."

The Dettore family joined the dozens of other families at the AASF to wait for the busses that would bring the Soldiers home from Fort Dix, New Jersey, where the unit underwent demobilization.

Many of the families mingled together to share stories and compare experiences, others anxiously awaited the arrival of missing family away from the crowds.

Sgt. (Ret.) Ausberto Lopez waited with one other family member for his step-brother, Spc. Edgar Munoz, of the 143rd Forward Support Battalion, who was attached to the 104th during deployment.

"We found out about three weeks ago,"

said Lopez of the return of Munoz. "Everybody was very happy. I'm very happy for he and his brothers."

Lt. Col. Mark Rousseau, Battalion commander, 1169th AVN, did not deploy with his troops, but supported their efforts and waited with the family for a chance to extend his appreciation and congratulations to his troops for a job well done.

"I'm ecstatic that they're back," said Rousseau, "and for the achievements they've accomplished. Everything you can imagine a helicopter doing, they did it."

The unit was responsible for flying Chinook aircraft on a wide variety of missions, from air assault to re-supply, said Rousseau. In total the group accounted for over 4,000 hours of flight time, incident free.

The success of the unit's missions earned it the prestigious Army Aviation Association of America's Unit of the Year, 2003, said Rousseau.

The award is given to the most outstanding aviation unit in the US Army.

"The Quad A award was their crowning achievement while in Afghanistan," said Rousseau.

Military service and awards aside and the Soldiers now home with their families, it's time for a little celebrating.

Many of the families swept their Soldiers away from the AASF to meet with more family and friends for welcome home parties or a quiet night with a returned spouse.

For those who turned out to see the Soldiers take their first steps onto Connecticut ground since leaving in February 2003, the images taken with them will last a life time, as will the accomplishments of the men and women serving in Co. G.



Soldiers of Company G, 104th Aviation Regiment experienced many tender moments on the ramp of the AASF when they returned after a year's deployment in Afghanistan. Holding young children and being held in the arms of loved ones were but two of those tender moments. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)



Tears of joy and relief flowed at the AASF when families were reunited with their Soldiers of Company G, 104th Aviation Regiment. (Photo by Sgt. Patrick Clark, 65th PCH)



Returning Soldiers were surprised by how much the children they had left behind a year ago had grown. (Photo by Spc. Jesse J. Stanley, 65th PCH)

wait for soldiers to arrive



Family members run to their returning loved one as Soldiers from Company G, 104th Aviation Regiment arrived at the AASF after a year in Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. Patrick Clark, 65th PCH)

Deployed Connecticut unit receives prestigious Army Aviation Award

LT. COL. THOMAS BOLAND
STATE AVIATION OFFICER

NASHVILLE - Lights! Cameras! Action!

The spotlight of the entire Army Aviation community was clearly shining on Company G, 104th Aviation on April 27 during the National Awards Dinner at the Annual Convention of the Army Aviation Association of America.

G-104th, a CH-47D flight company comprised of Soldiers from both the Connecticut and Pennsylvania Army National Guard, was lauded as the 2003 Outstanding Army National Guard Aviation Unit of the Year for its efforts while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"They always say that when you join the National Guard you are going to drill one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer", said Capt. John Kubitz, accepting the award as Executive Officer for G-104. "Well, we missed out on the weekend drills, but managed to do a 15-month AT."

Representing the Connecticut portion of the unit at the event was Staff Sgt. Paul Albert, a flight engineer for the unit and a full-time aircraft mechanic at the Connecticut Army Aviation Support facility (AASF).

The awards dinner was the highlight event of the week-long convention and was attended by nearly 2,000 people including Gen. Bryan Brown, the first aviation-branch four-star general and Commander of Special Operations Command, and Lt. Gen. Richard Cody, Army G-3, as well as numerous aviation industry leaders. The crowd was also treated to the National Anthem being sung by Wynonna Judd.

Throughout the week, G-104th was front and center as an example of what a successful deployment and mission assignment should look like.

"We have had a lot of great units doing a lot of great things this year," said Cody during his keynote speech to open the convention. "But some units stand out from the others. Company G, 104th Aviation is a unit that went to Afghanistan, was mission-tasked very heavy from their first day and performed well every time. And this is a National Guard unit that performed up to whatever standards were required of it."

The odyssey of G-104th began with an alert notification on Feb. 10, 2003 for a mobilization date of Feb. 13, and an arrival date at its mobilization station, Ft. Dix, on Feb. 18.

This unreal timeline was met by a unit that was spread between two states and was comprised of 212 Soldiers, 14 CH-47D aircraft, more than 60 vehicles, and literally tons of associated equipment.

The unit remained at Ft. Dix for nearly two months before shipping out to Camp Udhairi, Kuwait for scheduled operations in Iraq. After a month in Kuwait without aircraft or equipment, the unit was re-routed to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Finally in early June, the entire unit, all 14 aircraft, and all equipment arrived in Afghanistan and began operations.

The unit performed exceptionally well from the first day until the last. During the 10 months spent in theater, G-104th aircraft and flight crews logged nearly 5,000 flight hours and carried more than 10,000 passengers on a variety of challenging, dangerous, and mostly classified missions. The aircraft hauled more than 1,000,000 pounds of equipment, and aircraft petroleum specialists pumped more than 4,000,000 gallons of JP-8 aircraft fuel.

All of these operations were conducted in conditions ranging from 130 degree heat in the summer to below freezing operations in and around 15,000 foot mountain ranges. All operations were conducted without accident, incident, or serious injury throughout in a prime example of the skill and professionalism of all members of the unit.

The unit recently arrived back at Ft. Dix to commence demobilization procedures and begin terminal leave, all soldiers safe and sound back in the United States.

The unit is commanded by Maj. Dave Wood (PA) and includes 85 Soldiers from Detachment 1, Company G, 104th Aviation of the Connecticut National Guard. The Connecticut soldiers were led by Detachment Commander Capt. Robert Detrick and acting First Sergeant Sgt. 1st Class Brian Tripp.

Social Security FAQ on a weekend drill

COL. GARY OTTENBREIT, (J6) DIRECTORATE
AND ROBERT G. RODRIGUEZ, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, SOCIAL
SECURITY

Note: This column is addressed to women, especially divorced women, because 99 percent of the benefits the Social Security Administration pay to spouses of retired and deceased workers go to women. But Social Security laws are gender neutral, so the same provisions could apply to a divorced husband if his ex-wife has a higher Social Security benefit rate.

Many financial planners say that women need to save more because, on average, they live longer than men. Women reaching age 65 in 2004 are expected to live an additional 20 years—or four years longer than men. Longer life spans mean women will have to make their savings and investments last longer.

The best way is to plan early and carefully for your retirement years. Most financial advisors say you will need about 70 percent of your pre-retirement earnings to maintain your pre-retirement standard of living comfortably. Under current law, if you have average earnings, your Social Security retirement benefits will replace

only about 40 percent, so you will need to supplement your benefits with a pension, savings or investments.

Retirement planning should begin with the *Social Security Statement* that you receive each year, about three months before your birthday. It gives estimates of the retirement benefits you would be due at various ages, based on your own earnings record. The *Statement* also provides estimates of potential disability benefits, as well as estimates of what your family members could get in Social Security survivors benefits if you were to die.

What that *Statement* cannot do is tell you what Social Security benefits you might be due on your husband's Social Security record. If you are currently married, it's relatively easy to find out, assuming that you and your husband are doing some joint financial planning. As a wife, you could get up to one-half of your husband's Social Security benefit, depending on your date of birth and your age when you begin receiving benefits. Call the Social Security Teleservice at 1-800-772-1213 to find out what your benefits would be. Those benefits would be payable as early as age

62—if you are not due more money on your own Social Security record.

And a currently married woman can make some long-range plans to prepare for the possibility that she might become a widow. She could be due about 70-100 percent of her husband's Social Security benefits if he were to pass away. Widow's benefits are payable as early as age 60 (or age 50 if you are disabled).

To be eligible for benefits as a divorced spouse, you must have been married at least 10 years and you cannot be currently married at the time you file for these benefits. However, if you are a divorced widow and remarry after the age of 60, you may still be due benefits on your ex-husband's Social Security record.

Many times, a divorced woman finds it more difficult to make similar financial plans, especially if her ex-husband is reluctant to share his Social Security information with her. In these cases, Social Security can help. If you are a divorced woman, we cannot disclose any information about your ex-husband's Social Security records, but we can tell you what you might be due in divorced wife's or divorced widow's benefits.

Here's what you would need to do. First,

make an appointment to visit your local Social Security office. (Our rules require that we give you this information in person, not over the phone.) Bring evidence that shows you are potentially due benefits as a divorced wife or widow. In other words, you would have to show us a copy of your marriage certificate and divorce papers. We also would need to know your ex-husband's Social Security number. If you don't have it, we still may be able to locate it if you can provide your ex's date and place of birth, and his parents' names.

You should also visit Social Security's financial planning website at www.socialsecurity.gov/planners. You can use the calculators there to test different retirement ages or different scenarios for future earnings amounts. It also provides detailed information about how marriage, widowhood, divorce, self-employment, government jobs and other life or career events can affect your Social Security. And it includes a link to a non-Social Security worksheet that will help you decide how much you need to save and invest for a comfortable retirement.



Officers Club of Connecticut May Events

Sunday, May 9
Mother's Day Brunch
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Reservations 249-3634

Monday, May 17
House Committee Meeting
2:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 20
Board of Governor's Meeting
5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 25
Ladies O'Club Luncheon
12 noon

Friday, May 28
Club Night Lobster/Clam Bake
6 p.m.
Reservations 249-3634

Bar and Lounge open daily at lunch and from 4 p.m. to....
Club open for lunch daily from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Welcome our new chef, Saul Brown.
To book a party or event, call (860) 249-3624

OFFICERS CLUB OF CONNECTICUT

Presents

ANNUAL CLAM BAKE

Friday, May 28, 2004, 6:30 pm

\$23.95 per person

\$29.95 (w/ lobster)



Chef Saul will have a special menu including , Boiled Lobster, Mussels (steamed in Port Wine), Red Potatoes, Corn on the cob, in a String bag together with Pasta w/ sundried Tomatoes Grilled Chicken, Raw Bar, a Salad Bar and Roast Beef (for the faint at heart)Rhode Island Clam Chowder, Lobster Bisque

Fresh Baked Breads Coffee, Tea, Milk

Strawberry Festival Desserts



Reservations only (860) 249-3634
(you need to order lobster in advance)

Senior NCO of the Year credits hard work of squadron for honor

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

After the Connecticut Air National Guard's 2003 Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the year spent 12 years active duty in security forces, he wanted to continue his military service and work with the cops, so in 1996 he joined the 103rd Fighter Wing and has seen his squadron evolve to meet global demands for its service.

Senior Master Sgt. Timothy R. Shaw, operations supervisor, 103rd Security Forces Squadron, said he is proud of "being part of a force that was a total peacetime force and (now) being part of a unit that grew out of 9-11 into an active duty deploying unit."

Members of the squadron were activated post 9-11. Shaw spent four months working for the New England Air Defense Sector in Rome, N.Y. following the terrorist attacks.

He said the award is about the security

forces.

"It reflects more on the squadron than me," Shaw said. "It recognizes our squadron for the hard work it did last year, the year before that and the year before that."

He forecasts the operations tempo increasing and is working hard to meet that challenge.

"I want to make sure this group is prepared to go over, do what they need to do and be safe," he said. And, "build some leaders along the way so they can take my place when I'm gone."

The Seattle native is married to another Connecticut Air Guard member, Chief Master Sgt. Kristine C. Shaw, and has two daughters, Nicole, 15, and Samantha, 12. He resides in West Hartford and works fulltime on base. When he is not working, Shaw enjoys running, biking, golfing and spending time with his family.



Gould: shocked and surprised to be First Sergeant of the Year



STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Connecticut Air National Guard's 2003 First Sergeant of the Year was shocked and pleasantly surprised when he learned of his award.

"I almost feel guilty because a lot of people did their job and not everybody could receive recognition," said Master Sgt. Edward A. Gould, first sergeant, 103rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. He deployed overseas for 12 weeks last year with the Flying Yankees in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

It was an accomplishment, he said, "preparing and going over, everybody doing their job, nobody getting hurt, and everybody keeping high spirits and morale."

"I did what they trained me to do," he said.

Gould spent four years on active duty as a B-52 H model crew chief stationed in North Dakota, after which, he returned home to Connecticut in 1986 and joined the state

police. Today, he is a lieutenant with the agency and is a member of the statewide narcotics taskforce.

The Manchester resident said he joined the Guard after talking with a pilot at a career day.

"I missed the camaraderie of being in the military and the friends you make," he said. He worked as an A-10 crew chief until taking his first sergeant position in 2002. When that duty is complete, Gould said he hopes to continue progressing through the ranks and find a job where his skills can be used. He said he would crew chief again and has his sights on becoming command chief.

Gould is married to wife, Heidi, and has a daughter, Camden, 11. He has many interests outside of work, including working on his old home, supporting UConn basketball and cruising in his 1966 Ford Falcon.

"I like to drive around looking cool," he said.

DoD launches expanded communications for Servicemembers

DoD News

The Department of Defense has announced that it is expanding its internal communications efforts with two initiatives during National Military Appreciation Month in May 2004.

An electronic version of the "Stars and Stripes" newspaper will be available for downloading at no cost beginning on May 1, while the Pentagon Channel, the department's news and information television service, will become available to all U.S. military installations on May 14.

Making the electronic "Stars and Stripes" available world-wide allows servicemembers to view exact replica copies of the newspaper's European, Pacific and Mideast editions, providing timely theater news and information for and about deployed forces.

For the first time, servicemembers in the United States have access to this online newspaper, where the hardcopy newspaper is not printed.

The electronic version of the newspaper is available online at <http://estripes.osd.mil>

The Pentagon Channel will begin its expanded service with a live broadcast from the May 14 Armed Forces Day opening ceremony at Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

A portion of the live coverage will include remarks by senior military and civilian leadership.

The Pentagon Channel's daily programming will strengthen DoD's commitment to keeping America's 2.6 million active duty, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers the best informed military in the world.

Previously available only in the Pentagon and through the American Forces Radio and Television Service for servicemembers assigned overseas, the Pentagon Channel now will also be distributed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to military installations in all 50 states via a domestic satellite.

DoD is also offering the Pentagon Channel to all cable and satellite providers.

Information on how to receive the Pentagon Channel via satellite, cable or the worldwide web is at <http://pentagonchannel.mil>

May is
Military Appreciation Month
and the
Month of the Military Spouse

Military Matters



RUDI WILLIAMS
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

Defense Department officials want thousands more service members to invest in their future through the Thrift Savings Plan, or TSP.

And now is a good time for service members to start paying themselves. The current TSP open season started April 15 and runs until June 30. This is the time service members can start or change their contributions to their TSP account.

Service members can contribute up to 9 percent of their basic pay each month, and up to 100 percent of incentive pay and special pay, including bonus and combat pay. But their total contributions from taxable pay may not exceed the Internal Revenue Service limit of \$13,000 for 2004.

“You’re never too young or too old to start a savings account in TSP,” said Gary A. Amelio, executive director of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board and chief executive and managing fiduciary of

TSP for federal employees. “The tax deferral benefits are excellent and compounded earnings are simply a phenomenal way to increase your wealth.”

TSP assets total more than \$110 billion. The plan maintains retirement savings accounts for more than 3 million participants. This includes federal civilian employees in all branches of government, U.S. Postal Service employees and members of the seven uniformed services.

Administered by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, TSP was available only to civilian employees until October 2001, when the program was extended to active and reserve component service members s, including the Coast Guard. The program also was extended to members of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Members of the National Guard and Reserve who are also federal civilians are allowed to have both a military and civilian TSP. “If you’re part of both work forces, you

can have two different accounts,” Amelio noted. “And you can combine the accounts after you separate from either service.”

But Amelio said if TSP participants with military and civilian accounts exceed the IRS limit of \$13,000 before the end of the calendar year, the plan will return the excess contributions. “It’s called an excess deferral,” Amelio noted.

The government gives matching funds to Federal Employees’ Retirement System TSP participants. Uniformed services and Civil Service Retirement System participants normally don’t receive matching funds, but the service secretaries can authorize matching funds for service members in critical military occupational specialties.

“FERS employees have a less lucrative defined benefit plan than does CSRS and the uniformed services,” Amelio explained. “So the TSP is intended to make up the difference for FERS participants.”


He also pointed out that CSRS and military participants are limited to contributing up to 9 percent of their base pay, while FERS members are allowed to contribute up to 14 percent of their base pay.

When service members leave active duty, they have several options. They can leave their money in TSP, allowing it to continue to grow, take a partial or full withdrawal, roll the money into another plan or an Individual Retirement Account, or purchase an annuity. They also could choose to make periodic distributions to themselves, Amelia said.


“Participation numbers have been rising steadily since the plan was made available,” Amelio noted. “Today, we have about 410,000 members of the armed services participating. We’ve been putting a special focus with DoD on getting more and more armed service members to participate. So we’re very pleased that the numbers continue to go up, and DoD is helping us get the word out to the members.”



ANNUAL REDLEG BALL



You are cordially invited to join the members of the Connecticut Redleg Chapter of the US Field Artillery Association at their Annual Redleg Ball.



Date:	Saturday, 29 May 2004
Time:	1800-1900 Social Hour/Open Bar 1900 Dinner Presentations Social Hour followed by Cash bar
Place:	Trumbull Marriott 180 Hawley Lane Trumbull, CT 06611
Menu:	Roast Prime Rib of Beef Rock Cornish Hen Grilled Swordfish
Dress:	Military: Class A w/ White Shirt and Bow Tie, Army Blues/Dress Mess Civilian: Semi-Formal
Cost:	\$80.00 per person \$70.00 after RSVP
RSVP:	25 April 2004

Additional Information: Tim Yahn (203) 968-1456
Jack Duncan (845) 278-1840

Please detach and return along with check made payable to:
Connecticut Redlegs
1 Lakeview Dr East
Norwalk, CT 06850-2017

Name: _____ Rank: _____ Unit/Former Unit: _____

Guest: _____

Address: _____

I/we will _____ will not _____ attend. Total Attending _____

Entree Choice: _____ Roast Prime Rib of Beef
_____ Rock Cornish Hen
_____ Grilled Swordfish

APR 1 2004

An Open Letter to DoD's Civilian Employees:

The Department of Defense's civilian workforce is one of our country's most important national security assets. As we develop a process for designing and implementing the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), we want to ensure that all stakeholders in the new system -- including civilian employees, managers, and exclusive representatives -- have an opportunity to provide their thoughts, ideas, views and concerns.

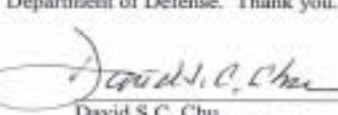
The task before us is to design a transformed system for the Department's 700,000 civilian employees that supports our national security mission while treating workers fairly and protecting their rights. But the NSPS is a means to that end, not the end itself. Secretary Rumsfeld has directed the implementation of NSPS to be inclusive and comprehensive.

DoD teams are working closely with the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Government Accounting Office. These teams will develop a comprehensive design and implementation process that will be presented to the Department's senior leadership in April. After internal approval, we will discuss the approach with Congress.


We are determined to take the time necessary to do the job right. As we work to refine the NSPS, the procedures and concepts will likely change over time. During this period of collaboration, you will have a variety of means by which to get information about NSPS. In the near future, please take time to do one or several of the following:

- Tune in to DoD's internal news outlets, including DefenseLink.mil and DefendAmerica.mil, featuring articles by the Armed Forces Press Service.
- Watch The Pentagon Channel or your local military television programming for announcements of upcoming "town hall" meetings and other Q&A sessions with DoD officials involved in NSPS design and development.
- Visit the NSPS website at www.opms.osd.mil/nsps to receive the most recent and up-to-date information. The website also provides opportunity to offer comments and suggestions.

Be patient as the process is still being defined, but working together, we can make this a world-class system to support our world-class team of civilian employees at the Department of Defense. Thank you.



David S.C. Chu
Under Secretary of Defense for
Personnel & Readiness



Gordon England
Secretary of the Navy



CHIEF MASTER SGT.
WANDA WAWRUCK

Enlisted Update

Celebration/ Recognition/ Remembrance

Spring has sprung and with warmer temperatures comes a time for recognition, celebration and remembrance...recognition of the hard work our men and women of the CTNG are performing, celebration for our Mothers and a day to remember those we have lost.

First, let me begin by recognizing the many months of backbreaking, sweat, and long hours the Fighter Wing has placed in preparing for this month's Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI). Over the past couple years; the Wing has led the A-10 fleet in modifications to participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

This month, they will demonstrate to an Air Force Inspection team that they are operationally ready for any challenge. I'd like to thank the many volunteers from other organizations that have assisted in the preparation and participating in the inspection. These individuals have traveled from other states as well as our Air Control Squadron in Orange. Their efforts and the efforts of all the members in the Wing will show the inspection team we are ready to perform our mission when called upon.

As we recognize those who work hard - we often think of our Mothers and it is that time of the year again when we will celebrate Mother's Day. Most may think that Mother's Day started when Hallmark made their first card, and although they may not be too far off, Mother's Day in the United States actually started with a woman named Anna Jarvis.

Anna, an Appalachian homemaker, organized an effort to raise awareness of poor health conditions in her community. In doing so, she sought the support from other mothers in the community and named their efforts "Mother's Work Day." Shortly after her passing, her daughter, also named Anna, did not want her mother's efforts to be forgotten, so she sought the support of many politicians. Approximately nine years from Anna's passing, President Woodrow Wilson signed a Joint Resolution designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

I'm sure every person has a story they can tell of how this day touches them. In whatever manner you celebrate this day, please remember the Moms who are currently serving our country and the children that await their safe return. As we honor our Moms, we also take time during the month of May to remember

those who paid the ultimate sacrifice defending our country.

Many will find themselves celebrating Memorial Weekend with family events, watching parades, or participating in parades. However, many will participate in Memorial Day activities by decorating gravesites of our fallen comrades.

Memorial Day, originally known as Decoration Day, was first observed on May 30, 1868 in commemoration of the sacrifices Soldiers made during the Civil War.

Signed in a Proclamation by General John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, May 30th was designated for the purpose of laying flowers of those who died in defense of our country. During the first celebration of Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery thus inspiring the local observances we participate in today. In 1915, inspired by a poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael developed her own:

We cherish too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led,
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies.

Based on Ms. Michael's poem, she conceived the idea of wearing red poppies on Memorial Day in honor of those who perished during war.

The tradition spread into a benefit to support war orphans sponsored by the Franco-American Children's League. Shortly after their disbandment in 1922, the Veteran's of Foreign Wars (VFW) became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies.

Throughout the years, more and more organizations have developed symbols such as placing American flags and candles at gravesites to honor the contributions of our fallen service members.

As we pay our respects to our fallen Connecticut service members, I ask that you continue supporting the families of those who are still deployed. Our Family Support coordinators and Connecticut National Guard Foundation are working very hard for us, but they cannot do it alone.

I encourage you to volunteer your time or support the many fund-raising events planned to help those families who may need the assistance. I appreciate everyone's efforts in supporting our service members and their families and look forward to seeing you at our next event.

Guard Voices

Why support family support? Why not!

Each member of the Armed Service puts their life on the line. They give of their time, and their lives. Family Support is one of our ways of giving "Thanks to them" and showing them "WE CARE."

I have been a firm believer in Family Support and was very active when it started up but due to my situation I am not able to give like I used to, but that does that mean I stopped. NO! I do what I can. Whatever they need to fill in the blanks, cooking, stuffing bags, etc, I will try to help when and wherever I can. If everyone gave one hour a month to just help in someway.... WOW!

We all are busy but what really bothers me is that last weekend my son's classmate was buried. Yes, Sgt. Felix DelGreco was my son's classmate. Twenty-two years of a young life.

How can anyone say they can not give of their time, just one hour, when this young man and others like him, gave of their life in the line of duty. These members of the armed services need "OUR SUPPORT" in any way you can. Even if it is a small amount of time or more. Whether our armed services are home or abroad, how can you not show your

support. They are ALL very special to us.

Please take the time whether you have a loved one, friend or you just want to show your support to our armed services, JUST DO IT!

Bumper stickers are nice but let's really show, from our heart, our support. Our children see our actions and carry it to the future of the next generation. It takes 30 minutes to make brownies, you can even give one to two hours serving refreshments, helping stuff bags to help show our support to our country's loved ones or if you can not spare the time then give a monetary donation so family support or the foundation can help our armed services members.

To state "I don't have the time"! I am so thankful that they have not said that to our Country..." I don't have time!"

RONNI-JO BEAUDRY
PAY AND ENTITLEMENTS TECHNICIAN
FAMILY SUPPORT VOLUNTEER
103RD FIGHTER WING

President George W. Bush

"We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning. We pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We have captured or killed many key leaders of the al Qaeda network. The rest of them will learn there is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice."

Sterling Heights, Mich., May 3, 2004

Homefront

In defense of Connecticut’s children: National Bullying Campaign

CPT ANNE-MARIE GARCIA
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION ADMINISTRATOR

On Monday, April 19, 2004, at 7:30 the Connecticut National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Program sponsored the National Bullying Prevention Campaign Satellite Teleconference, which was moderated by the US Department of Health and Human Services’ Health Resources and Services Administration and the US Department of Education’s Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools.

All military, Law Enforcement Agencies, Community Based Organizations, Leaders, Coalition Members and Volunteers were invited to attend.

The teleconference was a working town hall meeting with hundreds of educators and community leaders around the country. Designed to be a unique and informative event, it offered extensive information about effective bullying prevention, highlighted strategies and several successful prevention programs already in existence, created a platform for meaningful discussions among campaign representatives and individuals capable of bringing bullying prevention into our

schools and communities.

The objective of the teleconference was to stop bullying and identify bullying observational behaviors in youth. Research finds one incident of bullying every seven minutes, adult intervention in 4% of incidents and peer intervention in 11 percent of incidents; what conclusions can bullies draw from this? What conclusions can victims draw from this? Children, after all, learn from what they see us do, rather than from what we say.

Adults can intervene effectively to reduce bullying.

The first step is to Identify Bullying. It includes: Physical bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, punching. Verbal bullying: threatening, taunting, teasing, starting rumors, hate speech. Exclusion from activities: This does not mean that a child should not have the

right to choose to play, or not to play, with another child; it means that children should not be allowed to systematically exclude others: “No one play with Mary;” “No one wants to play with him;” “Don’t be her friend.”

Bullying is like spouse abuse or sexual harassment in that it is: Done by someone with more power or social support to someone with less power or social support

often includes the abuser blaming the target for the abuse. One way that educators and community leaders have found to address the subject is through Peer Mediation Training and Programs.

Peer Mediation Programs are a structured process led by student mediators.

Disputants must agree to basic ground rules before the process can begin. Each disputant is then given the opportunity to tell his side of the story. Mediators ask questions to help clarify the issues and to elicit feelings from each disputant.

Brainstorming follows. Disputants are encouraged to think of ways of solving the problem, especially what they could do to make things better, rather than what they want the other person to do.

After all ideas are listed, disputants select those which they believe would solve the problem and to which they are willing to commit. An agreement form is completed and signed by all parties. The peer mediators provide the service to students in their schools who request mediation. They work in teams of two and under the supervision of the school counselor and or teacher.

If you would more information on peer mediation or conflict resolution training contact Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia at the Connecticut National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Program at 860-493-2724.



Chaplain’s Remembering and honoring a fallen hero

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CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) KEVIN P. CAVANAUGH

More than 1500 people packed the Cathedral of Saint Joseph in Hartford on a warm April morning for the funeral service of Sgt. Felix M. Del Greco, the first member of the Connecticut National Guard to give his life in Iraq. I was honored to assist Bishop Peter A. Rosazza in celebrating the Mass of Christian Burial. With me in the sanctuary were six Army chaplains as well as five priests who were friends of the Del Greco family.

Governor John G. Rowland, Maj. Gen. William Cugno, Brig. Gen. I. J. Zemruski, Brig. Gen. Thaddeus Martin, Chaplain (BG) Ronald Gauss (ret.), Commissioner of Veterans Affairs Linda Schwartz, many other state and federal dignitaries, and hundreds of Connecticut Guardsmen were there to pay tribute to Del Greco – to pray for him, to honor his service and his sacrifice, and to support and console his family.

Probably without realizing it, everyone present was sharing in the three-fold mission of the Chaplain Corps: to nurture the living, to care for the wounded, and to honor the dead. It is obvious that we had come to honor Sgt. Del Greco; what may

not be as easily apparent is that we were also nurturing the living, as we demonstrated our caring for Sgt. Del Greco’s family and friends, and caring for the wounded – the wounded in spirit.

In his homily (sermon) Bishop Rosazza paid tribute to Sgt. Del Greco. He noted that “Felix had a vision, an idea of what life should be like, and strove to make that idea a reality. Like many young adults, he wanted a world where people would be at peace....”

He quoted Tom Brokaw who, in his work, *The Greatest Generation*, “describes the glory of those who, like Felix, gave their lives for a peaceful world: ‘The wonder of our fallen heroes is not that these men and women died, but rather that such men and women lived. Their deaths were the glorious testimony to their glorious lives. They did not die in vain. They captured for us a spirit that would not die. By their lives, by their efforts, the American way indomitably prevails. The inspiration of our heroes’ lives, not only now but ever, will stir the courageous of heart to continue the struggle. Our fallen heroes stand tall in our history.’”

In addition to praising Sgt. Del Greco, Bishop Rosazza paid tribute to the members of the Connecticut National Guard.

In his remarks he reflected upon the time that he had joined other religious and community leaders in accompanying Cugno on a Christmastime visit to members of the Connecticut Guard who were serving in



Bosnia. “After seeing and speaking with young Guardsmen and women from Connecticut, I grew in appreciation for the Guard, their sacrifice, and their role in keeping peace”

As Chaplain for the Connecticut National Guard and on behalf of all the members of our Chaplain Corps, I share Bishop Rosazza’s sentiments about the noble service that you perform.

Whether at home or deployed, you contribute greatly to our nation’s security and you provide an example of inestimable value for all Americans. We salute you. May God bless you, and keep you always in His care.

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PFC. JORDAN E. WERME
65th PCH

Computers are taking up less and less space in more and more homes. Cassette tapes and VHS recordings have given way to Compact Discs and DVD's. Microchips can now be used to track runaway pets.

Technology is advancing all around us, and for Connecticut's National Guardsmen that technology is also changing, allowing for improved training and more effective Soldiers.

The Fire Arms Training System has been used at Camp Rowland for almost two decades and the time for upgrade is coming, said Master Sgt. John B. Stone, training and operations Noncommissioned Officer in charge of the FATS training facility.

FATS III has been in use for the past few years and soon Stone and the rest of training staff will begin using FATS IV, a new and improved version of the familiar training program.

"We're going to be the first unit in the U.S. to get this system," said Staff Sgt. David J. Cherouny, service support NCO for FATS. "We use the current system more than anyone else in the country."

FATS is a computer-controlled training device which uses projected images to simulate real combat scenarios. Soldiers use modified weapons to fire at a large,



The FATS system projects an image on to the screen simulating multiple combat scenarios, allowing Soldiers to fire modified weapons and increase weapons proficiency. (Photo by PV2 Matthew Robertson 65th PCH)

movie theater-like screens which simulate firing scenarios ranging from basic marksmanship and military police tactics to anti-armor defense and S.W.A.T. tactics, said Stone.

The system tracks lasers fired from the modified weapons and reports hits and misses to a computer. Among the many weapons which can be used with FATS are the M-16, M-9, M-249 and AT-4.

Operators are able to make the simulations more realistic by using a modified paintball gun to fire small rubber pellets at the training participants.

Battle field sights and sounds are also simulated, making for an intensely real training experience, said Stone.

"If a unit has trouble shooting we bring them in and get them firing," said Stone. "We use it almost every weekend. We're getting a lot more use out of it now with Reserve components,

State Police, Air Force and Coast Guard security - and the DOD has even had people here to use it."

But the FATS system can be used for more than just firing, said Stone. CTT training is a big part of what the system is used for.

"All of the CTT tasks that come after a fire-fight can be worked on here," said Stone. First aid and operations orders are just two of the many CTT tasks the FATS system has been helpful in training.

"The thing we're trying to do is give them as much realistic training as we can provide," said Stone.

But the news of the FATS IV system's impending arrival is not alone. Another upgraded system may also soon be available, said Stone. The EST 2000 is another training system similar to FATS, but uses entirely animated sequences instead of the live action video featured by FATS.

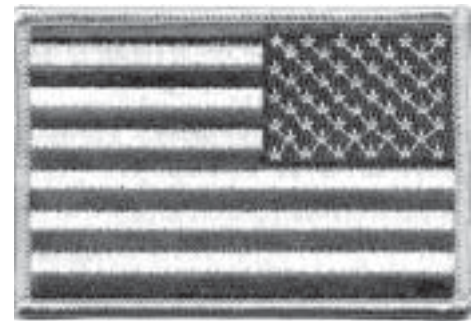
The EST and FATS systems may be used for weapons qualifications in the future, said Stone.

With either system, Soldiers, Airmen and others will have the best technology available aiding them in their training. And the possibilities are limitless.

"Whatever scenario someone comes up with for training," said Stone, "we can do it."

U.S. flag insignia to be worn by all

SGT. 1ST CLASS MARCIA TRIGGS



All Soldiers can now wear the U.S. flag insignia on the right shoulder of their utility uniform, as a continued reminder that the Army is engaged in a war at home and abroad.

"The flag has been around for years to identify deploying troops. Now based on the Army's joint expeditionary mindset, the flag represents our commitment to fight the war on terror for the foreseeable future," said Sgt. Maj. Walter Morales, the uniform policy chief for G1.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker approved the uniform item Feb. 11, and all Soldiers have until Oct. 1, 2005 to get the insignia sewn on their uniforms.

Currently there are not enough flags in the inventory, which is why Soldiers have a substantial amount of time to get the flags sewn on, Morales said. Deploying troops have the priority. Everyone else will have to wait until the Defense Logistics Agency has more in stock, he said. An estimated 30 million flags need to be procured, he added.

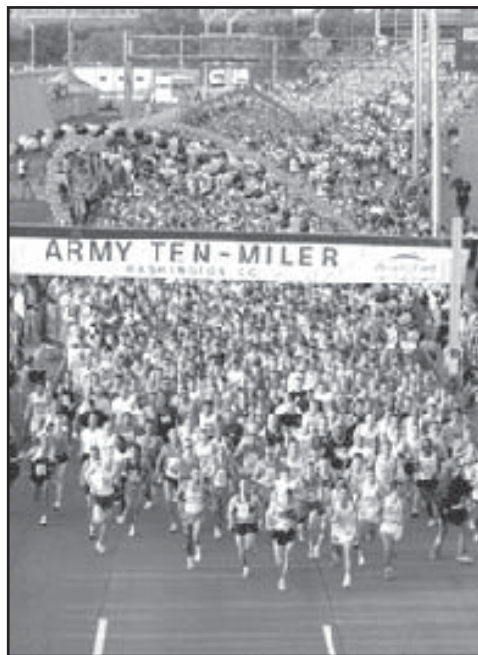
Enlisted Soldiers will not have to purchase the flags. They will be issued five flags from their assigned unit, and commanders will make arrangements for getting the insignia sewn on, Morales said. However, if Soldiers purchase the flags on their own, they will not be reimbursed, he added.

When purchasing the flag, the only ones authorized for wear on the uniform is the reverse field flag in red, white and blue. Individuals should comply with Army Regulation 670-1, Wear and Appearance of the Army Uniform and Insignia.

The regulation still states that Soldiers are not authorized to wear the full-color cloth U.S. flag replica upon their return to home station. However, the latest change will be added to the regulation when it is revised sometime this year, Morales said.

Nothing has changed regarding the placement of the flag, Morales said. It is sewn 1/2 inch below the shoulder seam. If a combat patch is also placed on the right shoulder, the flag is sewn 1/8 inch below the combat patch.

"The flag is worn on the right shoulder to give the effect of the flag flying in the breeze as the wearer moves forward," Morales said. "This will serve as a vivid reminder that our nation is at war."



20th Anniversary Army Ten-Miler

Sunday, October 24, 2004

Start Time: 8 a.m.

Washington, D.C.

Register Online at www.armytenmiler.com

Field is limited to 20,000

Guarding Your Rights

Legal Affairs: Ethical Conduct Training

CAPT. TIMOTHY TOMCHO
JAG OFFICE

On April 9, 2004, the Acting Secretary of the Army Mr. Les Brownlee signed an action memorandum requiring every soldier to receive annual ethics training. The Connecticut National Guard is implementing this requirement through its military attorneys (judge advocates). Judge advocates are often charged with the duty of performing ethics training and counseling.

Judge Advocates will conduct ethics training during their annual legal briefings, which will cover such issues as (1) acceptance of gifts and gratuities; (2) solicitations; (3) participation in or dealings with private and professional associations, such as AUSA, NGAUS and NGACT; (4) requirement for and review of public (SF 278) and confidential (OGE 450) financial disclosure reports, (5) resolving conflicts of interest; (6) post-government employment restrictions; and (7) use of government resources and time.

The Department of Defense (DoD) applies ethics laws to members of the United States Armed Forces through the **Joint Ethics Regulation (“JER,” DoD Publication 5500.7-R)**. The JER rescinds the Army-specific standards of conduct rules previously found in Army Regulation 600-50 and applies the Executive Branch’s standards to all DoD employees, including members of the National Guard.

The JER applies to Guardsmen while they are performing official duties or functions under the authority of titles 10 or 32 of the United States Code, or while engaged in any activity related to the performance of such duties or functions, including any time the member uses his National Guard status or position or any authority derived there from. Basically, the JER applies to the National Guard in all statuses, in all military missions, formal and informal. **All members of the National Guard are subject to the JER — and must receive training to ensure compliance with the standards of ethic conduct.**

Many of the standards are considered as general orders. As such, they apply to all military members without further implementation. Violations of such “general order” standards of conduct may be punishable as violations of a lawful order under the Uniform Code of Military Justice

(federal status) or the Connecticut Code of Military Justice (“state” status). For example, JER 2-301, a potentially punitive standard of conduct, states, **“Federal government communication systems and equipment (including Government-owned telephones, facsimile machines, electronic mail, internet systems, and commercial systems when use is paid for by the federal government) shall be for official use and authorized purposes only.”** Exceptions to JER 2-301 exist and are based upon reasonableness and minimal effect on duty performance.

Every Soldier who is a federal civilian employee should be aware of not only the JER restrictions but of Hatch Act restrictions as well. Congress passed the Hatch Act in 1939 for the purpose of separating the official duties of federal employees from their personal political activities. Federal employees must not use their positions and the federal resources available to them as federal employees to benefit restricted partisan political activities. Federal employees, while on-duty, must focus on their jobs, not on politics.

The Hatch Act limits federal civilian employees from engaging in certain political activities, but not all of them. Of course, federal employees may register to vote and vote. Federal employees, while off-duty, **may** (1) take an active part in a political campaign (so long as the federal employee is not SES, an Administrative Law Judge, or a Contracts Appeals Board member); (2) distribute campaign literature, join political clubs and attend political meetings; (3) assist in voter registration drives; (4) sign petitions for specific legislation or to place a candidate on the election ballot; (5) wear or display political badges, buttons, stickers and tee-shirts; (6) make monetary contributions to a political party, organization or committee, subject to other law limiting such contributions; (7) run for office in non-partisan elections.

Federal employees **may not** (1) run for office in partisan elections; (2) use official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering or otherwise affecting the outcome of an election; (3) knowingly solicit or discourage political activity on the part of any person who is doing business with that employee’s agency; (4) pressure employees concerning voting, political functions, activities or contributions; (5) engage in political

activities while on duty, on government premises, in a government vehicle or while in a government uniform; (6) solicit contributions from anybody else for the purpose of influencing any election for federal office; (7) solicit contributions for personnel services rendered to a political committee without charge for any purpose.

Army Regulation 608-20, “Voting by Personnel of the Armed Forces,” details the duty of a commander to facilitate absentee voting by members of their command, while deployed. Specifically, commanders at company level must appoint an officer, who is or who will be trained, as a voting officer or counselor.

The appointed officer should be readily available to deployed members and be equipped to provide aid in voting in federal, state and local elections. The officer shall ensure that an ample quantity of Standard Form (SF) 76, “Post Card Registration and Absentee Ballot Request,” is available for use by soldiers upon request. Additionally, commanders must provide qualified (under concerned State law) officers to attest to the oaths required by SF 76.

If confronted with issues that raise ethical issues, including personal participation in political activities, DoD employees and National Guardsmen are well advised to contact their ethics counselor or their assigned judge advocate. Judge Advocates, while serving as ethics counselors, must advise individuals receiving ethics counseling as to the lack of the attorney-client privilege, a privilege usually applied to attorney-client (legal assistance) communications.

The use of the advice provided by an ethics counselor *generally* precludes disciplinary action against an employee who follows the advice. Public service is a public trust, requiring government employees to place our adherence to ethical principals above our personal private gain. We all must take the necessary steps to ensure that we “do the right thing.”

This article is not intended as and does not constitute legal advice. Specific legal issues are unique to each person and factual situation. Persons with legal issues are encouraged to personally consult with an attorney.



NGACT: Working for you



At its annual conference held at Foxwoods Resort and Casino in March, NGACT elected several new executive board members.

Those elected to two-year terms were:

President: Bill Cusack
President-Elect: Debbi Newton
Secretary: Claire Potier
Treasurer: Dave Fecso
Army Officer: Kim Rolstone
Army Enlisted: Mike Straite
Army Jr. Enlisted: Jesse J. Stanley
Air Enlisted: Juanita Hunt

There were no candidates for the Air Officer or Air Jr. Enlisted positions.

At its first monthly meeting with the new executive board, Cusack appointed Thomas Heath to the vacant Air Officer seat. He also appointed Charles Jaworski to fill the unexpired term as Army Officer that had become vacant due to a resignation. Cusack said he would make an appointment to fill the unexpired term of Army Enlisted at a later meeting. This position had become vacant due to Newton’s election as President-Elect.

Cusack also made several committee chairmanship appointments at the monthly meeting.

Standing Committee Chairs are:

Legislative: Debbi Newton
Membership: Bill Cusack
EANGUS: Debbi Newton and Mike Straite (Newton will serve in this capacity for 90 days to provide for transition between chairs.)

NGAUS: Tom Heath and Charles Jaworski
Public Relations: Jesse J. Stanley and Debbi Newton (Newton will serve in this capacity for 90 days to provide for transition between chairs.)

Scholarship: Juanita Hunt
Corporate Membership: Kim Rolstone
Awards: Kim Rolstone
Constitution/By-Laws: Bill Cusack

Event Committee Chairs are:

Golf Tournament: John Godburn
Annual Conference: George Worrall
Dinner Dance: George Worrall
Area I Caucus: Debbi Newton
VIP Breakfast Reception: Debbi Newton

The 2004 NGACT Scholarship Applications are now available by contacting Scholarship Chair Juanita Hunt at juanita.hunt@ctbrad.ang.af.mil

Please note that the deadline for the applications is much earlier this year to provide students a better opportunity for financial planning.

The new deadline is June 30. Please plan accordingly.

Visit the
Connecticut Guardian
on-line at
www.ct.ngb.army.mil

Inside OCS

Learning, teaching and leading by example goal of OCS

SOC JASON DeSOUSA
OCS CLASS 49

Throughout my brief military career, my perception of officers has been one who is respected and held to the highest of standards. Officers are not simply respected by their presence alone but by their dedication and commitment to the Army, their unit and themselves.

I have always believed that proper courtesy is rendered to officers and at times only because one is expected to render such courtesies and respect. It is a different story altogether to show that respect and mean it. An officer can walk into one's surroundings and have a group of Soldiers snap to attention and render a salute. Do those Soldiers do so out of procedure or because they respect that individual as an officer and a leader and member of their team?

It would be an awful situation to lead a platoon of Soldiers to include your NCOs, into training or possibly battle and have them doubt their leader every step of the way. An officer has to be committed, dedicated, and honest. They should stand tall and proud and demonstrate the Army Values. They should carry out the mission and keep the safety and wellbeing of their soldiers in the forefront.

I have had experience with this in my civilian career, and it is quite obvious when the mission fails and the subordinates are not motivated and seem to care little about the mission. On the other hand, when a subordinate goes above and beyond what

is expected from them and does so with high levels of motivation and dedication, the mission is a success. Each member of the team not only feels proud of his or her accomplishments but proud to have done so as a member of that team. That is what makes any mission a success, and sets the foundation of success in the future.

I did not have an abundance of knowledge regarding OCS other than it was one of several programs geared to develop officers within the Army. I knew it was state program that included two annual training periods and many months of drills. However as the program advanced, I learned it was much more than one weekend a month and two annual training periods. The program is challenging in more ways than one.

The Connecticut Army National Guard OCS Program is unique from any of the other regional OCS programs being it plays host for the rigorous Phase I training period. That alone gives the candidates a sense of pride and reason to be motivated.

Each Connecticut candidate was proud to be part of such a program and even prouder of the fact that our program is regarded as one of the finest and is chosen to be host to the regions Phase I.

The program consists of much more than your drill weekends. For starters, every candidate must juggle his or her personal and civilian lives along with OCS. Each month student leadership is appointed, and it is their responsibility to follow the training schedule and to maintain a high level of motivation in doing so.

Mid-month meetings, long telephone conversations and numerous emails are all part of the program. Each drill the TAC staff and instructors present challenges and more stress. However as the program continues it is obvious that these challenges and stresses shape each candidate into a better Soldier, leader and more importantly a stronger person.

Every month each candidate is faced with different challenges and is placed under pressure to make a decision and carry out the mission. Candidates at times are required to justify their decision and drive on with it. Candidates are also required to pool their knowledge and work with each other as a team and lead that team to success, just as the candidate will have the opportunity to lead their respective platoon following commission.

The cadre of OCS, including TAC staff instructors and support staff, demonstrate leadership and provide the knowledge and tools that candidates draw from to be successful leaders themselves. Just as candidates are taught to lead from the front and set an example, cadre does as well. Although it may seem at times that they are your enemy, they truly care about the candidates and the ARMY. Their mission is to develop Soldiers into competent, motivated and skilled leaders. What better way for a class of Officer Candidates to learn how to set an example, lead from the front and remain motivated while doing so, then to have a cadre that does so themselves. That is by being dedicated, well disciplined,

and highly motivated.

Candidates learn from their mistakes and the mistakes of others and grow from them. Just as we learn from our mistakes academically we learn from our tactical and operational mistakes as well. The Instructors and TAC staff help us understand what went wrong, why it went wrong and what to do to correct it. In doing so we are developing into better and stronger leaders.

Being a leader in the Connecticut Army National Guard is truly a special thing. You are the given the opportunity to work with and lead a diverse and variety of Soldiers, NCOs and Officers. Every member of the Connecticut Army National Guard has something important to bring to the table and something unique to add to their unit from their academic, civilian and personal life. As a platoon leader you can develop with these individuals and watch them develop as well. Leading from the front and setting an example are two basic principals that OCS is developed around. It is up to each candidate to take with them the skills and tools learned and developed in OCS.

OCS is a two part challenge; completing the course by staying motivated and dedicated while becoming a leader, and to take with you all you have learned and demonstrate that to your platoon. Live up to the ARMY values and follow in the shoes of those who have come before us and have given their lives to enable us the opportunity to take part in such a program and tradition.

Why Diversity?

Why the confusion between equal opportunity and diversity?

SUBMITTED BY SGT. 1ST CLASS SCOTT J. FARRELL
STATE DIVERSITY INITIATIVES COORDINATOR (SDIC)

A message from Major Thomas E. Languirand, Chief, Diversity Initiatives, Army National Guard, printed in the ARNG Diversity Initiatives Newsletter Spring 2004.

As you know, Equal Opportunity is rooted in statute and law. Equal Opportunity is vital to maintaining workforce/membership equality as well as affording access to Equal Opportunity. Equal Opportunity also offers a venue for redress of issues and allegations of discrimination. Maintaining a strong and vibrant Equal Opportunity program in the Army National Guard directly impacts personnel readiness.

Soldiers must be mentally and physically fit to train for war and fight America's wars. Equal Opportunity is a cornerstone of mental fitness. Again, leaders from the Director of the Army National Guard on down must view Equal Opportunity as a

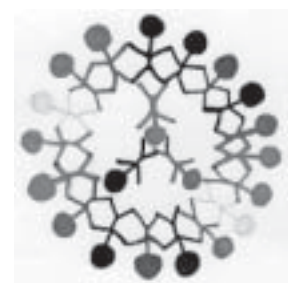
mission essential requirement. Leaders must continue training Prevention of Sexual Harassment and general Equal Opportunity topics. Special Ethnic observances as well as multicultural events are encouraged so all can learn and benefit from the contributions of others. Lastly, we are all responsible for creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination.

Diversity focuses on the fact that America is changing and changing at a pace that was not anticipated. Demographically, our country is in a state of constant flux with trends that dictate that we do business differently to leverage these demographic changes. We must review and as necessary adjust policies, processes and procedures on how we recruit, select, train, promote and retain Soldiers, DA civilians, Technicians, state employees and contractors to leverage these demographic changes.

While some view diversity from outward appearance (race, ethnicity and gender),

these are but one aspect of diversity. There are generation issues (boomers, xers and nexters), socioeconomic status of newcomers, inner city, urban and rural, cultural differences, religious and societal value differences. The value of diversity is capitalizing on these differences in a meaningful way, a way that will allow the Army National Guard to maintain ready units to support local, state and federal missions. On a natural path of progression, reflecting our communities throughout our rank structure will enable greater retention and recruiting opportunities.

Bottom line is that Equal Opportunity is the law, whereas diversity is adjusting policies, processes and procedures to leverage demographic realities. If these demographic realities include some outward appearances that could be drawn to Equal Opportunity, so be it. Look for value beyond race, ethnicity and gender; look for value in the individual.



If you have an interest in being part of the Diversity Initiatives team please contact (860) 878-6718 or E-Mail at scott.Farrell@ct.ngb.army.mil

Thought of the Month

Human diversity makes tolerance more than a virtue; it makes it a requirement for survival.

Rene Dubos

Health & Fitness

Your Health Matters: Mouthguards can save your smile

**LT. COL. DAVID FRIED
CTARNG, CHIEF STATE DENTIST**

Mouthguard facts:
Without front teeth, you can whistle all the time without even opening your mouth. The National Sports foundation estimates that over 5 million teeth are lost annually due to injuries. The most common injured tooth is the central incisor, which receives 80 percent of all dental trauma. With missing front teeth, corn on the cob becomes creamed corn, and apples need to be cut into pieces. Mouthguards are credited with preventing 200,000 injuries annually in high school and college football. Total rehabilitation costs for a single knocked out tooth are more than 20 times the cost of a quality professional mouthguard. Lifetime dental rehabilitation

for a single tooth can cost more than \$15,000. Mouthguards can help prevent concussions, unconsciousness, jaw fractures and neck injuries. Without a front tooth, people might mistake you for Mike Tyson. Mouthguards are not only for hockey players and prize fighters. Everyday life for many people includes activities such as basketball, soccer, bicycling and baseball, and the trauma associated with an elbow to the face can be devastating. When participating in sporting events, a mouthguard may be the only thing protecting your smile from damage. Mouthguards are made of soft plastic, and are relatively comfortable to wear. There are three types: professional custom fabricated, boil and bite, and stock guards. The best fitting and most expensive are made by Dentists using models of patients’

teeth. These are made using a vacuum pressure machine, are well-adapted to teeth, and are invaluable to safeguard teeth from damage. Although this type of mouthguard can be expensive, they offer the most protection. Unfortunately, most patients choose this option only after investing a lot of time and money into extensive rehabilitation dentistry, and they are being careful not to repeat their initial injury. Boil and bite types of mouthguards can be the best defense, and can be purchased in most athletic stores. These are relatively inexpensive and are the best for growing children who may need a new guard fitted every few months. Stock mouthguards are the least amount of protection, but still offer some protection. Mouthguards are like seatbelts, and they need to be worn in order to be useful. It is

estimated that mouthguards prevent more than 200,000 injuries each year. Organized youth sports, such as hockey and football, require mouthguards be worn by all participants. However, during pickup game and recreational leagues rarely enforce protective wear. The uncool image of wearing a mouthguard while playing driveway basketball can be tainted by one elbow. Serious injuries, such as concussions, jaw fractures, neck injuries and tooth trauma can be prevented through the use of minimal protective equipment. The Dental profession recommends that players participating in basketball, softball, lacrosse, rugby, martial arts and skating wear protective mouthguards. For more information about mouthguards, visit the Academy of General Dentistry online at: <http://agd.org/consumer/topics>

West Nile update – Fight the bite for a healthier summer

**MAJ. SHIRLEY SAMY
HEALTH PROMOTIONS OFFICER, 103RD MEDICAL GROUP**

If it isn’t SARS, it’s something else. And this year’s “something else” is West Nile virus. Even though most people who are bitten by infected mosquitoes do not become ill, some people must fight the bite. Those most at risk for illness and death are the elderly, people with weakened immune systems, and pregnant women, according to the *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, just out. Certain mosquitoes could carry West Nile virus – a flu-like illness that has been spreading westward across the USA since it first showed up in New York City in 1999. West Nile virus was discovered in 1937 in the West Nile district of Uganda. Check your state on the updated tracking maps from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov). The virus is spread to humans by mosquitoes. Most people bitten will not get sick, say experts. Some will develop symptoms such as sudden onset of fever,

headache, and body aches. Someone infected may also be sensitive to light and have pain behind the eyes. Most people who develop symptoms will recover. Deaths are rare. There is no known effective treatment or vaccine to prevent West Nile virus in humans, although tests are beginning. Mild cases do not require treatment. Birds who have died from the virus pose no health risk. The disease is only transmitted by a mosquito bite. Mosquitoes – the middle guy or vector in this cycle – become infected by biting birds that harbor the virus. The virus cannot be spread from person to person or from birds to people. Report dead birds (especially crows and blue jays) to local health officials so they can be tested and the virus tracked. But use gloves if you dispose of dead birds. To guard against infection, various experts offer these precautions:
· Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks. (This should sound familiar from

my previous article on insect repellents). You can spray your clothing with repellents containing permethrin or DEET because mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing. Do not apply repellents containing permethrin directly to exposed skin. If you spray your clothing, there is no need to spray repellent containing DEET on the skin under your clothing.
· Use insect repellent containing 10-30 percent DEET solution when outdoors. Children should not use a solution stronger than 10%. For more details on pesticides and their application, click the National Pesticide Information Center <http://npic.orst.edu/>.
· Mosquitoes are attracted to the carbon dioxide in your breath and the nitrogen waste your body sheds through perspiration. If you’re sweating, reapply repellent frequently, especially to the back of your neck and ankles.
· Citronella, which is frequently used in outdoor candles, is a good deterrent

against mosquitoes, but it doesn’t provide long-term protection.
· Mosquitoes are active in the early morning, from dawn until 10 am, and in the later afternoon and early evening. Limit your outdoor activities or protect yourself during those times.
· Use screens on open windows and repair holes in screen doors.
· Eliminate mosquito-breeding sites, especially after a rainstorm, such as standing pools of water in roof gutters and pool covers, old tires, buckets, flowerpots, and toys. Drain your birdbath.
· Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, hot tubs, and outdoor saunas. If not in use, empty them and keep them covered.
· Replace your outdoor lights with yellow bug lights.
Sources: CDC, Iowa Department of Public Health, US Department of Agriculture, Temple University, eMedicine.com, *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* (September 2003)

Fit for Life: Do You Have a Retention Problem?

Weight Retention is everyone’s problem. Connecticut culture is more technically focused, information driven, and system managerial. We are more sedentary. We Sit more than we Walk. We Drive now instead of Bicycle. We Phone or E-Mail instead of Memo or Letter. We Elevator or Escalator instead of Stair Case. The busier we are the less active we seem to be. Along with our “deactivation” (decrease in our physical labor) our culture has changed what we eat. Three significant food changes occurred during the last Century: White Flour, White Sugar, and Corn Syrup. Articles I have read during the last two weeks, indicate that three major disease trends are directly related to

those particular foods. The American Medical Association has acknowledged that Colon Cancer, Diabetes, and Obesity are directly related to those three foods. High Fructose Corn Syrup has become an “ingredient of choice” for many foods we buy and consume everyday. Read the labels on your beverages, your bread, your cookies, your juices, your, pancakes, your cereals, your yogurt, you will find that many products that used to have sugar (dextrose, glucose, sucrose, galactose, etc.) now substitute a portion or all the sugar with a for of Corn Syrup. An interesting article in the April issue of AARP Magazine describes the history and reasons for the American conversion to Corn Syrup. <http://www.aarp.org/bulletin/toc/Articles/>

[tableofcontents.html](#)
The problem is (according to health professionals) that fructose is a different chemical than other sugars. Fructose has a very specific reaction in the human body that “other sugars” do not. After sugars pass through the intestine walls and enter the blood stream they must be metabolized by some system in the body. Simply put, most sugars result in increased insulin excreted into the blood to make the sugars available as energy to our cells. High Fructose Corn Syrup is metabolized by the liver. The liver’s normal procedure (like a great Supply Sergeant) is to store the material until needed. Hips, thighs, abdomen, “tush” are the ware-houses for our liver’s storage system.

Last month we shared a plan how to increase your calorie output. This month the plan is to decrease your calorie input to prevent storage. When shopping for groceries choose the products that have no corn syrup. Pick the products that have sugars especially reduced sweetners. Beverages seem to be the worst offenders. They come free with every “fast-food meal deal”. Metabolically speaking the soda with “real sugar and twice the caffeine” may be healthier for you than “the real thing, the uncola, or the choice of the new generation”. Eat plain yogurt and put in fresh fruit. Eat whole grain breads that use natural sweetners. Pick the cereals with less sugars

See Fit for Life Page 25

DoD launches expanded communications for Servicemembers

DoD News

The Department of Defense announced that it is expanding its internal communications efforts with two initiatives during National Military Appreciation Month in May 2004.

An electronic version of the “Stars and Stripes” newspaper will be available for downloading at no cost beginning on May 1, while the Pentagon Channel, the department’s news and information television service, will become available to all U.S. military installations on May 14.

Making the electronic “Stars and Stripes” available world-wide allows servicemembers to view exact replica copies of the newspaper’s European, Pacific and Mideast editions, providing timely theater news and information for and about deployed forces.

For the first time, servicemembers in the United States have access to this online newspaper, where the hardcopy newspaper is not printed.

The electronic version of the newspaper is available online at <http://estripes.osd.mil>

The Pentagon Channel’s daily programming will strengthen DoD’s commitment to keeping America’s 2.6 million active duty, National Guard and Reserve servicemembers the best informed military in the world.

Previously available only in the Pentagon and through the American Forces Radio and Television Service for servicemembers assigned overseas, the Pentagon Channel now will also be distributed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to military installations in all 50 states via a domestic satellite.

DoD is also offering the Pentagon Channel to all cable and satellite providers.

Information on how to receive the Pentagon Channel via satellite, cable or the worldwide web is at <http://pentagonchannel.mil>

Fit for Life

From Page 24

or even rolled oats. For breakfast, even better have steak and eggs or breakfast burritos (papas con huevos rancheros). Your body will have better balanced energy for the whole day. Without having to get a sugar fix every two hours.

Sugars are necessary in our food. We need to take care: when, what type, and how much eat and drink. 100 years ago the average person ate about 8 pounds of “sugars” a year. Today we eat more than 60. Its time we change for the better!

Warrant Officer Update

‘Eagle Rising’ gets its retirement papers - almost

CW5 MARK S. MARINI
STATE COMMAND CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER

It’s official, after almost two years of speculation, and much debate, some of which was extremely heated, the Warrant Officer’s “Eagle Rising” insignia will disappear off of our collars and be replaced with traditional officer branch insignia.

On 23 March 2004 a Headquarters Department of The Army message was issued informing us of the upcoming changes to the Warrant Officer Corps’ Chief Warrant Officer 5 (CW5) rank and the Warrant Officer’s branch insignia.

The conversion on the wear of branch insignia and colors by Warrant Officers is the first step towards our full integration of recruiting, accession, education and management into the branch-based systems of the larger officer corps.

The decision to change the CW5 rank to the CW5 insignia, which was approved in 1970 by a former Chief of Staff, Army resulted from the increased use of our most senior warrant officers in Joint Operations which validated the need to standardize the CW5 rank insignia among all the services that employ them.

The changes are to be implemented effective 9 July 2004, which coincides with

the 86th Anniversary of the Warrant Officer Corps.

The CW5 insignia is a silver-colored bar, 3/8 inch in width and 1 1/8 inch in length, with a black line in the center of the bar.

The wear of basic branch insignia on all uniforms will be based on the Warrant Officer’s Primary Military Occupational Specialty (MOS).

The wear of General Staff insignia, National Guard Bureau Branch insignia, and Staff Specialist Branch insignia are based on assignment and further information can be found in AR 670-1.

The “Eagle Rising” insignia currently worn on all service caps will also be replaced by the “Coat of Arms of The United Sates” insignia. This too is effective 9 July 2004.

The Dress and Mess Uniforms will reflect the appropriate branch of service color, to include sleeve ornamentation, shoulder straps, hatband, and mess jacket lapel.

This can be implemented upon purchase of a new uniform but no later than 9 July 2006. The changes on the dress and mess can be implemented prior to 9 July 2004; however, they must all be done simultaneously.

The “Eagle Rising” insignia was approved for wear in November 1920 and the Warrant Officers of the Tank Corps were the first to

wear the insignia in May 1921. Always the symbol of the Warrant Officer Corps, it represented the most highly qualified technical experts within their respective fields. With such a long and honored history, it would be tragic to totally discard this insignia.

So, in keeping the Eagle Rising symbol alive and associated with the Corps, Warrant Officer Candidates will wear the insignia beginning at the senior phase of Warrant Officer Candidate School and continue wearing it until graduating from their Warrant Officer Basic Course.

The Warrant Officer of today is quite different from the Warrant Officer of yesteryear; the Warrant Officer has always been the technical expert, the person both Officers and Enlisted sought out for guidance. Today, we still maintain the technical expertise, but we are also leaders. We, as Warrant Officers should be proud of our heritage and should be prouder of our destiny. We are “Technicians Who Lead”.

If anyone out there is interested in becoming a Warrant Officer, check with the Full Time Support Personnel at your unit on requirements or contact me @ mark.marini@ct.ngb.army.mil.

Welcome Home Task Force 192 Operation Noble Eagle

Up Front

From Page 2

He is no stranger to the armed forces; Mr. Zapanta enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1964, reaching the rank of Sergeant in the 12th Special Forces Group. He was commissioned through the California Army National Guard Officer Candidate School (OCS) program in 1966. Join me in welcoming this great American to Connecticut.

Maintaining the strength of the Connecticut Army National Guard has become a top priority. We are focusing on how to use our force more effectively. This means we need to manage our force to permit for 25 percent of the Guard to be deployed; with up to another 25 percent training to replace those already

deployed; and ensuring that a minimum of 50 percent remains available to the Governor for state missions, Homeland Defense, and support for Homeland Security operations. We will balance our force to react and meet the threats of today and tomorrow.

To do this we need to keep up with recruitment and retention. We are all recruiters. Every single Soldier and Airman in the Connecticut Guard is a recruiter.

You represent the Guard every time you wear the uniform, people see you in it, and they appreciate your commitment and loyalty to the service.

Don’t be afraid to talk about the Guard and the benefits we offer people who join our ranks.

This is especially true for young people getting ready to enter college. Tell them of

the tuition benefits they can receive once they put on the uniform.

But also be upfront, we live in a different world, the National Guard is now an important asset in the war on terrorism. About 80 percent of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marine reservist can expect to deploy at some point in their part-time careers.

We have a number of slots open in the Army and Air side of the house. We could use more MP’s, truck drivers, CH-47 helicopter repairer, chemical operation specialists; the list goes on and on. Use your experience to recruit the future of Connecticut National Guard. Or refer possible candidates to your nearest recruiting office.

Keep your head in the game!

Retirees' Voice

Road tripping the retiree way

SGT. 1ST CLASS (RET.) JOHN BEDNARZ

Here is the latest in the adventures of two retirees trying to take advantage of our benefits as military retirees. My wife and I made a decision to attend the Connecticut National Guard Retirees of Florida (CNGROF) annual meeting in Orlando, Florida. We would also make it a road trip and see a few of the Military Installations along the way.

Our first overnight stop on the way down I-95 was at Fort Lee, Virginia. We wanted to reserve ahead to be sure we had a room but were told that their policy is to take reservations only 48 hours ahead of arrival. So we called the afternoon before we left.

Our stay there was comfortable and inexpensive.

Our next stop was the Navy Lodge at Jacksonville Naval Air Station in Florida. We ate at the 'Chiefs Club' and had a few cocktails there. This is a picturesque spot and we enjoyed the scenery.

The following morning we headed for Orlando to join the others at the LaQuinta Hotel where we would have a wonderful reunion with so many former friends and co-workers from the Connecticut National Guard. The activities that they had arranged and the chance to reminisce made it a wonderful vacation for us. The 'meeting' on Saturday was punctuated by a talk given by Maj. Gen. William Cugno, the Adjutant General, giving we retirees a good picture of how the Connecticut National Guard was doing and where it is heading.

The lunch that was provided after the meeting was marvelous. The retirees living in Florida put it on. One nice feature of staying at that LaQuinta is the Navy Exchange is within walking distance from the hotel.

After saying our good-byes we

continued our adventure by going north a short distance to Deltona, to visit a long time friend of my wife Ginny.

We spent a few fun days there and then headed to the 'panhandle' of Florida to a place called Destin. Destin is West of Panama City and East of Pensacola. It is on a little peninsula on the Gulf of Mexico. At Destin, is a place called the "Army Infantry Center Recreation Area." The Morale, Welfare and Recreation office (MWR) at Fort Benning, Georgia runs this recreation area. We spent several days at this area because we are considering it as a winter retreat from the snow and cold weather next year.

We left Destin and headed home with our next stop being Dobbins Air Reserve Base north of Atlanta, Georgia. There, we had fine accommodations and had our evening meal at their club.

Our next stop was Fort Bragg, North Carolina. At Fort Bragg we were given a suite and boy, did we enjoy that. The living room was comfortable, the refrigerator was stocked, and the bed was enormous. The following day we spent so much time in the exchange that we got a late start on the road. This spoiled our plan to spend the next night at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. We did try for an alternate, stopping at Fort A.P. Hill and the Marine Base at Quantico in Virginia. Both places were all booked up. We ended up staying at a Hampton Inn, which was nice, and we got 'military rates.'

My advice to all after our adventure is to be well prepared. Research and plan your trip, but always be prepared for alternatives. Try to make your reservations in advance. Our trip was very inexpensive and we had fine accommodations. All military installations check for ID and it doesn't hurt to have a DOD sticker on your vehicle.

Retirees Picnic – 2004

August 25th
1200-1700

Camp Rowland, Niantic CT

Bring a guest!

Active Duty Welcome!

Pass the word!

Meet old friends!



Raffle! Prizes!

Lots of Food,
Beer & Soda!

Live Music!

Card Games!

Come Join the Fun! Mark your calendar!

As a special tribute, any retiree that is 80 years-old or older in 2004, attends for FREE

Detach and return to COL(Ret) Bob Kelly

2004 Retirees Picnic

Cost: \$18.00/person by July 23rd
\$20.00/person after July 23rd
FREE Over 80 in 2004

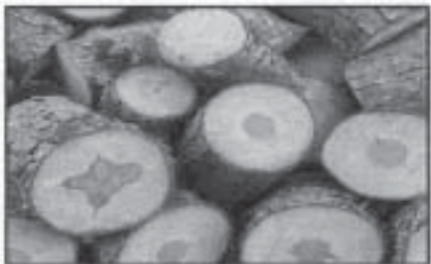
Name: _____ Rank: _____ Army Air
Address: _____ Return with payment:
City: _____ COL (Ret) Bob Kelly
State: _____ Zip: _____ 214 Church Street
Phone: () _____ Wethersfield, CT 06109
E-mail Address: _____ 1-860-529-6851

Make Check payable to: **NGACT**

My Address has changed from last year.



Free Firewood



@ Camp Hartell
Call 1LT Boudreau if interested
(860) 386-4006

247th comes home

From Page 1

“But nothing can really prepare you for a year-long combat deployment. It’s really a great credit to the guys. Each and everyone of them brought something to the table and did a fantastic job.”

Lane said he was very relieved to have brought all his Soldiers home.

Lane said the unit spent three months living in Iraqi villages while drilling for water, and while the experience was interesting, it was also dangerous.

“There were a lot of insurgents in those areas and we took a lot of sporadic fire, a lot of mortar rounds,” said Staff Sgt. Stephen Pearson. He said it was much different than being in Central America drilling wells for the remote villages, because there you knew everyone wanted you there. In Iraq, you could never be quite sure, although the villagers were all very grateful for their wells and water.

The members of the 247th spent a week at Fort Drum undergoing the demobilization process before being flown to Camp Rowland for reunions with their loved ones.

On a blustery day with the sky was devoid of clouds, the family members recieved word to go outside, that the helicopter bearing their loved ones would soon be in sight.

“It’s coming,” said Lt. Col. Tom Bolland, state aviation officer, who heard the Blackhawk before anyone else saw it. He pointed it out to all family members while it was still just a black speck in the sky, but by then, the anticipation had grown to an almost unbearable state.

Television and still cameras were trained alternately between the faces of the loved ones, and the speck in the sky that soon began to take the shape of a helicopter.

“Here they come! Here comes Daddy!” shouted one youngster as he struggled to hang on to the family dog.

As the helicopter came into full view over teh grounds of Camp Rowland, it veered off over the water to come in from behind the waiting crowd for its landing on the parade field. As they came over the field, the Soldiers of the 247th could see the outline of their unit designation on the ground...all done in small American flags. Cugno was the first to greet the Soldiers as they disembarked from the Blackhawk, followed by a team of Soldiers tasked with gathering the engineers’ belongings and equipment.

“Wait until they get to the flags, then we start running,” said one woman.

But that didn’t happen...nothing could hold these families back once they saw their Soldier’s grinning face coming towards them.



Staff Sgt. Stephen Pearson gets enveloped in a family hug upon his return to Connecticut after a year in Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)



Families and friends gathered at Camp Rowland and eagerly awaited the return of the Soldiers of the 247th Engineer Detachment. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

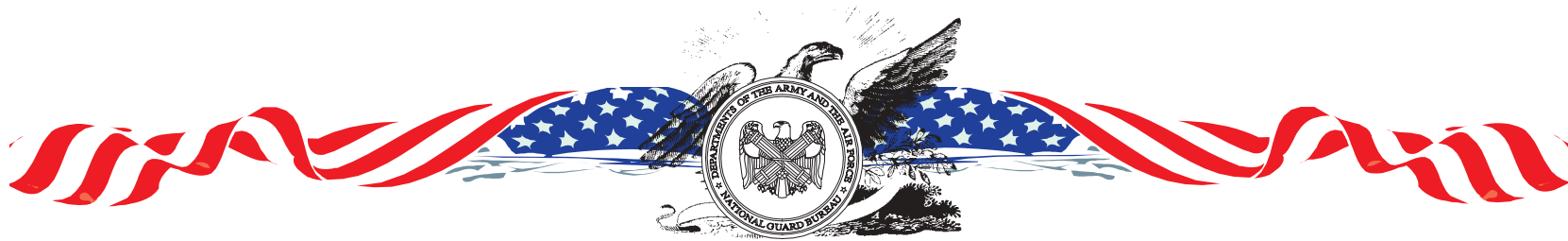


Family reunions were the order of the day, and many Soldiers could not take their eyes off the children who had grown up a great deal in the past year. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

Welcome Home 248th Engineers Operation Iraqi Freedom

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Family Deployment Supplement to the Connecticut Guardian

VOL. 5 NO. 5

HARTFORD, CT

MAY 2004

3,500 eggs gone in less than 3 minutes

Spc. Joseph Waller
65th PCH

It was a first for Camp Rowland.

It was a record. On Saturday, April 10th, 266 children looked out over the parade field covered with 3, 500 pastel colored plastic eggs filled with candy covering areas between colorful Easter decorated boundaries.

Children of all ages waited anxiously for their chance to participate in the fifth annual Easter egg hunt put on by the Family Support Program of the Connecticut National Guard.

When the call to commence was sounded, it took the children less than three minutes to clean the field of all of all the eggs.

Before the hunt, children aged from one month to twelve-years-old along with their friends and family were treated to breakfast cooked by volunteers from the 1st Company Governors Foot Guard who heated up the stove as early as 4:30 a.m. as

they have done each Easter for the last five years.

After breakfast the children followed Easter decorations to an arts and crafts room organized by the Family Support Group of Connecticut. Kids made necklaces sporting their names or "Easter", colored in fuzzy pictures of the Easter Bunny and flowers, while still others decorated paddles and played games.

Upon arrival, the Easter Bunny took its place among the children, sitting on a tree stump to meet the children whose parents took their picture. The press of children and families seemed overwhelming, and it was as attendance more than doubled compared to last year making the fifth annual Camp Rowland Easter Egg hunt the largest in its history.

The event, attended by members, retirees and family of the Air National Guard and the Army National Guard of Connecticut brought more than 450 people. Events like

these were important for the servicemembers and their families according to volunteer Donna Rivera who has been with the Family Support Group for more than twenty years saying, "It gives families the chance to come together and relax and have fun...this is especially important in this time with the war and deployments. This is the heart of the Guard, support of the families."

Volunteers like Rivera gathered hours before the breakfast and the egg hunt filling and tying balloons, setting up decorations and helping the Easter Bunny with all the eggs. Sgt. Jonathan Duffy, working for the Family Support program in Waterbury, was there as well and commented on the event.

"I think it is outstanding. It gives soldiers the chance to get together outside of drill along with their kids."

Duffy's thought were echoed by Bernice Herring-Sylvestre from Lisbon who brought her five children to see the Easter Bunny.

"The kids have a great time. I like the

activities they have, it seems to get bigger every year. I think that it brings us (Air and Army Guard members and their families) together, it gives us a chance to talk and have fun."

And the kids like it too. Nine-year-old Sean Chmielewski said he liked it because, "I get to see my friends and the Easter Bunny. I just have fun, and I get to see how many eggs I get. Last year I got fifty. This year I'd like to get two times as many."

Also in attendance to volunteer and help with the distribution of Easter Egg baskets filled with toys and candy were member of the Yale College Student Association for Military Family Support. Watching the kids prepare for the egg hunt she commented, "This is how we can help these families, there is a crisis in our country and the families of servicemembers need to be supported. Anything that we can do to lift their spirits, make them happy, makes us happy."



A young girl scrambles to gather as many eggs as she can. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)

One young man takes the time to check out his loot during the annual Breakfast with the Easter Bunny egg hunt sponsored by the Connecticut National Guard Family Program. The event, held at Camp Rowland, has turned in to a highly anticipated time to gather families together for a day of fun. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Markowski, 65th PCH)



AAFES supports deployed troops with public phone card sales

SGT. 1ST CLASS DOUG SAMPLE, USA
AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE

The Defense Department has granted approval for the Army and Air Force Exchange Service to sell prepaid phone cards to the general public for donation to Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom service members.

By law, only patrons with military exchange privileges can shop at AAFES retail stores, but officials announced this week that the exchange service would begin selling phone cards to normally ineligible people and organizations on its Web site.

“It is truly an effort by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to reach out and to make sure that we keep our troops connected to home,” Army Maj. Gen. Kathryn Frost, AAFES commander, explained. “Everybody wants to do something for the troops to let them know they care, and this is a way they can do it.”

The general said hundreds of people and several civic organization have called wanting to make a purchase since word got out about the program.

Those wishing to purchase the cards can log on to the site and click on the “Help Our Troops Call Home” icon. The cards can be designated for an individual service member, or sent to “any service member” and distributed by the American Red Cross.

Frost said phone cards also can be donated to the Air Force Aid Society and Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, as well as the Fisher House. All are nonprofit charitable organizations that support service members and their families in need.

AAFES officials said most calls from the Middle East to the United States originate from one of their 54 calls centers.

AAFES has four phone centers in Afghanistan with 98 phones in operation, 19 in Kuwait with 571 phones, and 31 in

Iraq, with 936 phones.

Frost said new phone centers will added as requirements are identified throughout the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

The average price for a call is 32 cents per minute from Iraq and Afghanistan, and 19 cents per minute from Kuwait.

The AAFES price is about 8 cents per minute cheaper than its closest competitor, according to Frost. And beginning May 1, she said, the price per minute when calling from Iraq and Afghanistan will be reduced from 32 cents per minute to 25 cents per minute when using the 550-unit prepaid card.

The general emphasized that the special 25-cent rate applies only to 550-unit prepaid cards purchased from AAFES post or base exchanges and other contingency operation stores operating in the theater of operations, she said.

AAFES also is allowing normally ineligible patrons and organizations to purchase gift certificates for deployed service members through its “Gifts from the Homefront” program, Frost said. The certificates are sold by a commercial vendor through the AAFES Web site or by calling (877) 770-4438, toll-free. She said the certificates can be sent to service members overseas and used for purchases at AAFES facilities.

AAFES is a joint command of the Army and Air Force for authorized patrons to buy goods and services. The organization donates a percentage of its earnings to military morale, welfare and recreation programs.

According to its annual report, AAFES donated about \$229 million to MWR activities in 2003. Frost said a percentage of the proceeds from phone cards sales will go to MWR funds.

“So when Americans buy the cards, they are helping troops in two ways: They’re connecting them to home, and they’re contributing to morale, welfare and recreation programs.”

Soldiers who re-enlisted for desert to get retro bonuses

SGT. 1ST CLASS MARCIA TRIGGS

An estimated 5,000 Soldiers who re-enlisted last year may be eligible for a pay bonus.

Bonuses up to \$5,000 will be retroactively paid to Soldiers, between the ranks of specialist and staff sergeant, with 17 months to 10 years in service, who re-enlisted between March 18, 2003 through Sept. 18. Only those who re-enlisted under the option of being assigned to a deployed unit in Afghanistan, Kuwait or Iraq are eligible, said Ron Canada, chief of Retention Management Division, Human Resources Command.

Soldiers have until June 30 to contact their career counselors and request the lump sum payment. The program will still be open through July, but career counselors will have to submit all pertinent information to the Retention Management Division for review, states military personnel message 04-141.

If a Soldier received a bonus based on his military occupational specialty, he is not entitled to receive the lump sum of \$5,000 in addition to it. However, he is entitled to the bonus equaling the higher amount, the MILPER message stated.

The action to get Soldiers retroactively paid was the result of a junior Soldier from the 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ky., making a poignant comment to Les Brownlee, the acting secretary of the Army.

Last year the Army had extra money and was looking to boost retention, Canada said. So it announced that it would give a special bonus up to \$5,000 to Soldiers who re-enlisted Sept. 19 through Sept. 30, Canada said.

While visiting the Central Command area of operation, Brownlee heard from a junior Soldier who re-enlisted prior to the bonus being offered. He told Brownlee that he would have appreciated getting a bonus for re-enlisting too. Brownlee later went to Congress and received \$25 million to retroactively pay those Soldiers who are eligible under the newly expanded dates, Canada said.

In Brownlee’s testimony before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, he said the Army is an all-volunteer force doing tremendous work, and recruiting and retention are of great interest to senior leadership.

“We will continue to rely on a robust Selective Re-enlistment Bonus Program to enable achievement of our retention program. Developing ways to retain Soldiers directly engaged in the ongoing war on terror is critical,” Brownlee said.


However, retroactively paying the Soldiers wasn’t really done for retention, Canada said, since they had already re-enlisted. Brownlee did it primarily to recognize their duty over there, Canada added.



HANDYPERSON HOTLINE

“CARRYING THE HOMEFRONT”

**SERGEANT MAJOR
TOBY P. CORMIER**
Ph: 860-441-2984
Cell: 860-209-0770
toby.cormier@ct.ngb.army.mil



WELCOME HOME COMMEMORATIVE T-SHIRTS HONORING THE 248TH EN CO

We would like to show our support for the 248TH by wearing Welcome Home t-shirts to their Homecoming. The cost of the shirt will be \$12.00, all profits will support the units welcome home event to be held in December. Please submit your order form with payment as soon as possible so that we can distribute on Homecoming Day.

We appreciate your support of our soldiers! Mail your completed order forms to:
Meg Marx C/O 248TH Homecoming Committee 38 Stott Ave Norwich CT 06360

The shirt will have the Engineering Emblem on the Left Chest with 03 on one side and 04 on the other, above the emblem will be 248TH EN CO and below will be CTARNS. The back will have a yellow ribbon in the background with OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) followed by the bases they were stationed at: Al Asad, Ar Ramadi & Baghdad down the back; at the bottom below the yellow ribbon it will say Welcome Home!

In addition we would like to order a shirt for each of the soldiers that would be the same in design except for instead of Welcome home it would say "Been There, Done That!" You may place your orders for these shirts now as well, however, they will be presented at the Homecoming Celebration.

We have several other ideas for fundraising including a cookbook. If you would like to participate in the project please let us know or simply mail your favorite (or your soldier's) recipe to Cookbooks C/O Homecoming Committee 38 Stott Ave Norwich CT 06360. If we do not get enough participants we will not be able to complete this project. You can also email your recipes to andrea.lathrop@ct.ngb.army.mil. Thanks for your help!

Please detach and mail promptly to Meg Marx c/o 248TH Homecoming Committee, 38 Stott Ave, Norwich CT 06360

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____

"Welcome Home" T-shirts
Size Requested: Adult Small [] Medium [] Large [] X-Large [] XX-L [] XXX-L []
Youth Small [] Medium [] Large [] X-Large []

"Been There, Done That!" T-shirts
Size Requested: Adult Small [] Medium [] Large [] X-Large [] XX-L []

Total Number of Shirts Requested _____ x12.00=Amount Enclosed _____
Please make your checks/money orders out to Meg Marx and put 248TH T-shirts in the memo.

Children's smiles warm Easter Egg Hunt on a cold day

MAJ. GEORGE Worrall
103 FW PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Neither rain, or cold, nor potential snow could keep these hunters from their prey the first weekend in April as 103 unit children gathered for the annual 103rd Fighter Wing Easter Egg Hunt in the base dining hall.

"We had 89 children registered by Friday, then 103 children showed with parents," said Donna Rivera, wing family program coordinator, who organized the event.

"I thought we were going to get rain so we had a backup planned but it was just cold."

The children and their families enjoyed making crafts, eating, posing for pictures with the Easter Bunnies and the hunting of the eggs.

"The highlight of that day was the surprised looks from the kids and parents as they got Easter bags as a final surprise when they left," said Col. Dan Scace, commander, 103rd Fighter Wing. "The kids were all happy and it was a wonderful event for the kids."



Children and parents spill from the dining hall and embark on the search for eggs despite temperatures in the 30's and occasional rain at the 103rd Fighter Wing Easter Egg Hunt on April 3. (Photo by Senior Airman Erin McNamara.)

"We had a ball!" said Master Sgt. Daniel Walsh. "He (son Kevin, age 20 months) is still calling for the Easter Bunny."

Of course, the family program volunteers are what make events like this possible.

"They were in the planning from the beginning and when it came time to execute, it all went smoothly thanks to the volunteers," said Rivera.

Thanks to donations and money from Air Combat Command, unit members and their families only paid a token \$1 per person.

"Coca Cola donated about 200 cans of Sverve, a new product like a milkshake in a can, and Grote and Weigel gave us the 400 hotdogs everybody enjoyed," said Rivera.

Although the rain dampened the ground, the families and the Bunny himself seemed pleased.

"It was funny this year with a slow start versus the normal rush, the weather must have slowed people down," said the Easter Bunny through his interpreter Col. Scace. "The five minutes outside for the egg hunt without rain was from a link we have for good weather."



Master Sgt. Holly L. Caroon, NCOIC command staff office, 103rd Maintenance Group helps her daughter Savannah, 5, complete a craft project at the Wing Easter Egg Hunt on April 3. (Photo by Senior Airman Erin McNamara.)

Understanding Tricare benefits while traveling

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS KATIE BOOHER
5TH BOMB WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

It is easy for a person to access his or her health benefits at home, but it can get complicated when they going on vacation across America or overseas.

Emergencies, including injuries threatening someone's life, limb or eyesight, are covered by Tricare Prime; but, the beneficiary still has some responsibility for getting in touch with the medical facility at his or her home base, said Terri Bell, 5th Medical Support Squadron beneficiary counseling assistance coordinator.

"If a Tricare Prime beneficiary, whether active duty, retiree or family member, is confronted with an emergency while traveling, they should seek immediate care

at the nearest hospital emergency room," she said. "However, members should be sure to notify their primary care manager within 24 hours to initiate a record of the care they are receiving. Members on the personnel reliability program or flying status must notify the PRP section or flight medicine as soon as possible after receiving treatment."

Urgent care is also covered; however, all Tricare Prime beneficiaries must contact their primary care manager to obtain authorization before seeking care, Ms. Bell said.

"If a beneficiary seeks care from a civilian provider and doesn't receive a prior authorization for the care, they'll be billed under the point-of-service option, and they will pay a higher cost-share and a \$300

deductible," she said. "Active-duty members will be responsible for the total charges."

Beneficiaries should take their prescription medication and immunization records with them on vacation, but if they are on maintenance medication, they can receive a 90-day supply, Ms. Bell said.

"If people are traveling within their Tricare region and need medication, they only have to pay the copayment by using a network pharmacy," she said. "If members must fill a prescription while outside of their region, they will have to pay the entire amount and seek reimbursement from Tricare once they return."

Under the new pharmacy contract, Ms. Bell said there will be only one claims

processor for pharmacy claims. When beneficiaries use a network pharmacy, their claims will be processed online; however, they are also responsible for covering their \$3, \$9 or \$22 copayment.

When traveling outside the United States, patients pay the bill upfront, but Tricare will reimburse them when they return, Ms. Bell said.

"Because the Code of Federal Regulations doesn't permit direct payment of medical or dental claims to a foreign provider, the patient must pay the bill upfront," she said. "When the patient gets home, (he or she can) file a claim directly with Tricare."

For more information on these and other military health-care benefit issues, call the local Tricare office.

Shades of Green reopens Walt Disney World doors to military families

TIM HIPPS
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

More military members and their families can exclaim “I’m going to Disney World,” thanks to the recent expansion of Shades of Green Armed Forces Recreation Center on Walt Disney World Resort.

Brig. Gen. Robert Decker, commander of the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, served as master of ceremonies for a Shades of Green grand reopening March 31 at the hotel’s Porte Cochere.

“This is not just a grand opening, it’s a celebration of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines because that’s what these properties take care of,” said John McLaurin, deputy assistant secretary of the Army for Human Resources. “The Shades of Green here represents the Army’s latest commitment to providing high-quality morale, welfare and recreation opportunities to members of the U.S. Armed Forces.”

Charles Abell, principal deputy undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness said the resort provides much-needed respite from the rigors of military duty.

“This is an occasion that reaffirms the Department of Defense’s commitment to provide quality, wholesome and affordable

recreation opportunities to members of U.S. forces who have and who continue to underwrite the peace and stability of our nation,” Abell said.

Abell also mentioned how Shades of Green makes the Central Florida vacation experience affordable for those who have stayed there.

“It is gratifying to see this dramatically improved and expanded hotel on these beautiful grounds. This wonderful facility is one of the jewels in the Armed Forces Recreation Center crown.”

The other AFRCs were represented at the Shades of Green reopening. The Hale Koa Hotel in Hawaii; Dragon Hill Lodge in Korea; and Edelweiss Lodge and Resort, which is scheduled to open this autumn in Germany, staged exhibits during the reception, providing a taste of many cultures — from Polynesian and Korean dancers to an Oktoberfest tent complete with an oompah band from Epcot.

Even Mickey and Minnie Mouse joined the festivities, along with friends Donald, Daisy, Pluto and Goofy.

But the true star of the ceremony was the resort itself. With the reopening, it has more than doubled in size with the addition of 299 rooms the previous 287, plus a 500-seat ballroom, two new restaurants, and a second

heated swimming pool. The upgraded complex also better accommodates buses that shuttle guests around Disney’s property, separate from the flow of traffic near the hotel’s check-in area.

The response from guests at the upgraded Shades of Green has been overwhelmingly positive.

“We hear things like: ‘We can’t wait to come back’ and ‘This is the best thing the Army has ever done;’ ‘We love this place;’ and ‘This is our home away from home,’ — all great things,” Shades of Green acting general manager Melissa Colvin said.

Shades of Green is adjacent to Disney’s Palm Golf Course, home of the PGA Tour’s FUNAI Classic, and just outside the gates of Mickey Mouse’s famous house. Another one of Disney’s five championship 18-hole golf courses and a nine-hole executive layout are within walking distance.

The hotel features two lighted tennis courts, hot tub, children’s pool and play area, lounge and sports bar, banquet accommodations, gift shops, video arcade, laundry facilities, fitness center and automated teller machines.

Guests are provided transportation to all Walt Disney World attractions and early entry into select venues inside the Magic Kingdom. Epcot, Disney-MGM Studios and

Disney’s Animal Kingdom Theme Park are just minutes away.

Affordability, a term often lost on visitors to Disney World, is the main attraction to Shades of Green. Room rates are based on rank and range from \$70 to \$225 per night for a standard room and \$82 to \$119 for a poolside room.

“The more junior enlisted you are, the better your savings,” Colvin explained. “You can’t find our room rates at any other Walt Disney World Resort.”

For room reservations at Shades of Green, call 888-593-2242 or fax to 407-824-3665. The hotel’s direct number is 407-824-3400 and fax is 407-824-3460. An online reservation system is coming soon.

Reservations are accepted up to one year in advance. Six to eight months in advance traditionally is required to secure a room. Holidays and long weekends tend to get booked a full year in advance.

For soldiers on short-notice R&R leave, Shades of Green has overflow contract arrangements with alternate hotels at Walt Disney World Resort.

(Editor’s note: Tim Hipps is assigned to USACFSC Public Affairs.)

READ THE FOLLOWING STORY AND FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH WORDS YOU CHOOSE.
WHEN YOU ARE DONE, HAVE FUN READING IT ALOUD. SEND IT WITH YOUR NEXT
PACKAGE TO HELP YOUR FAVORITE SOLDIER HAVE A LITTLE FUN TOO!

REMINDERS: NOUN=person, place, or thing (e.g. bowling ball) ADJECTIVE=a describing word (e.g. funny)
VERB= action word (e.g. jump)

THE CARE PACKAGE

I sent my favorite soldier a box of goodies to celebrate the start of spring in the USA. I searched in the _____ (room where you live) for a big _____ (color) box to ship all the treats in. Grandma said it was alright for me to take stuff out of her pantry to send. I took a _____ (adjective) bag of chips, a small box of _____ (name of candy), and a roll of _____ (noun). I included a picture of my _____ (pet) that I drew in _____ (special area class). I cut out the headlines from the local newspaper, The _____ (name of favorite game). I added in my favorite comic strip, _____ (name of cartoon). My friend, _____ (person in the room) thought I should put in a _____ (item in the bathroom), but I thought it would be too _____ (adjective). Since it is spring, I also put in a _____ (item in a yard). My box was full to the rim, so I took some _____ (color) tape and asked _____ (person in your family) to help me. We _____ed (verb) on the box, almost crushing it. We were finally able to shut it all the way, so it was time to tape it closed. I took my box to the post office where it cost _____ (amount of money) to ship. I hope _____ (name of your favorite soldier) likes the care package, especially the _____ (animal)!

Kids' Creative Corner

A MONTHLY FEATURE OF FUN AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES